

**An investigation into the impact of the marketization of
further education on individual teacher identities using
visual images, metaphors and narrative to analyse and
evaluate the key themes and discourses**

By

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Glossary

AL	Additional Lecturer
AOC	Association of Colleges
BIS	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
Cert Ed	Certificate in Education
EdD	Doctorate in Education
FE	Further Education
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
FE Ti	Further Education Teacher Identity
FTM	First tier manager
HS2	High Speed Rail 2
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
NHS	National Health Service
NPM	New Public Management
OFT	Office of Fair Trading
OFSTED	The Office for Standards in Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SSS	Strong social suggestion
Ti	Teacher Identity
VITAE	Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness
WAV	Waveform audio file
WSS	Weak social suggestion

Abstract

Teacher identity (Ti) is an important concept in helping to understand the variety of interconnected influences that impact on the professional lives of teachers in further education (FE). Ti is under researched within the FE sector and is used in this study to analyse the impact of the marketization of FE (post-incorporation) on the roles of individual teachers and teacher managers. The study takes an interpretive stance using visual metaphors and the narratives of participant teachers, linked to their roles, and teaching journeys, to analyse and evaluate changes to professionalism and individual agency in response to the marketization of the sector. Key literature on Ti in FE, professionalism and teacher agency were used to develop an understanding of the effects of marketization in relation to the main question and market theory provided a lens through which to consider marketization in context. The findings identified the individualised nature of the effects of marketization on the identities of teachers and how they interpreted their roles. These were seen through different levels of teacher agency and changes to professionalism in response to managerialism and the altered culture of the colleges in the study. A summative conceptualisation of Ti in an FE context was developed, which provided an insight into the potential strategies adopted by staff in relation to marketization and the main question set for this study.

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction and aims of the study

In 2012 Lord Lingfield was tasked by the government to undertake a review of professionalism in FE, twenty years after the watershed of incorporation and the removal of colleges from local authority control. Lingfield cites John Hayes, the then Minister of State for Education, who in 2010 described the sector as having been infantilised and encumbered by too much and too detailed intervention from government agencies. The report discusses government intervention during this period in FE and the relationships between colleges and their staff:

It seems to us likely that these interventions have, in the name of control and accountability, weakened the very characteristics successive governments have wished to nourish: good governance; self-reliance in academic quality assurance and continuous improvement; and a primary focus on furthering the interests of customers – students, their employers and their communities. The sector has matured beyond a need for such interventions in our view; they are now widely resented. There is some evidence that this ‘command and control’ environment has infiltrated relations between some FE providers and their staff, on whom a good service to customers relies

(BIS 2012, p.1)

This passage encapsulates the position of the FE sector some twenty five years after the incorporation of colleges, which signalled the introduction of huge changes to institutions and staff working within them. This study takes incorporation in 1993 as a starting point from which to investigate the marketization of the FE sector (Hall and O’Shea 2013) through successive government controls (Lucas and Crowther 2016) and its impact on the teachers of FE colleges.

The study will consider the political and ideological context that Beck concludes both Conservative and Labour governments have adopted over the last forty years in seeking to 'restructure and 'modernise' the teaching profession in England and Wales' (2008, p.121).

Fundamental to the changes within FE has been a neo-liberal reform agenda, focused on transforming public sector working practices and culture through the adoption of private sector managerial practices (Devine et al. 2009) and a focus on educational outputs (Ball 2007). Successive governments have developed a range of policy initiatives and mechanisms to measure and quantify the quality and value for money provided by FE. These have sought to control the sector and led to a potential conflict within colleges between structures developed by organisations in response to government changes and the agency of teachers in developing their identities (Gleeson et al. 2005).

More recently, along with the Lingfield Review (2012) there have been several publications that have identified government intentions regarding re-shaping the nature of the FE sector going forward. These have included; The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2011, 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016), 'The Review of Vocational Education' (Wolf 2011) and 'What does skills policy look like now the money has run out?' (Keep 2014). These documents have sought to identify areas the government feels need addressing within the sector including; 'developing a vision for FE, simplifying the funding structure and further developing the nature of competition between providers' (BIS 2011, p.8). The report (New Challenges, New Chances Further Education Reform Plan) also outlines a mechanism for the government to review the provision of post 16 education within a given area and these 'area reviews' which

have recently been completed with recommendations regarding the shape of FE going forward with a number of new mergers already having taken place (BIS, 2016).

The proposals for change outlined highlight failings with the implementation of what Gleeson and James describe as the 'modernisation project within FE' (2007, p.452). In particular, the need for a clear vision to help shape and develop the FE sector and decide the nature of funding and competition. Since incorporation, funding in FE has focused almost entirely on efficiency and costs as the main mechanisms for engendering change (Ainley and Bailey 1997) and these underlying principles still remain as key drivers within the sector (Lucas and Crowther 2016).

This then forms the background for this project, which was undertaken within four colleges within the West Midlands region. Three of the colleges were general further education institutions, varying in size between £7 million and £45 million turnover, while the fourth was a large sixth form college.

The central research question underpinning this study is:

How do teachers in FE colleges, form, maintain and develop their professional identities, with particular reference to the interplay and tension between external government intervention and an individual's agency to act in ways which reflect their own sense of what being a teacher means?

In seeking to answer the main question, I have developed a number of key issues of enquiry based on the literature review undertaken for this study (chapter two), which will be used to help frame and provide an insight into the central question. In particular:

- *What impact has the incorporation of colleges and marketization of FE had on individual teacher and teacher/manager identities and roles?*
- *What impact have the government changes had on notions of professionalism and what it means to be a professional within FE?*
- *What strategies are employed by individual staff in response to these changes and the new educational cultures?*

Participants within the study included both teachers and teacher managers to enable a review of the impact of post incorporation changes at a micro (*individual*) and meso (*organisational*) level to be undertaken. The study also included four different (but not always distinct, given the different college structures) employment roles/positions: lecturer, first tier manager, middle manager and senior manager with a view to looking at the different pressures and perceptions of the government changes on individuals within each of these roles. The study also included teachers with different levels of experience, both within education and individual vocational specialisms, which the literature suggests influence the development of Ti (Day et.al 2006).

1.2 Locating the study in a conceptual and theoretical framework

The theoretical framework has evolved during the life course of the study with theory informing data and vice versa (Miles and Huberman 1994). The themes within the study have been influenced by the writer's own knowledge and experience in FE both as a practitioner and researcher. This process has been reflexive, constantly refining the scope and direction of the study with different elements and levels of interpretation being played off against each other. The literature discusses the importance of frames of reference as the vehicles through which individuals understand their experience, pointing to these encompassing 'cognitive, conative and emotional components' (Mezirow 1997, p.5) and that, transformations in frames of reference take place through critical reflection (p.7).

Teacher identity (Ti) is the central concept within the study, which Cote and Levine (2002) define as being made up of different aspects of social behaviour that involve an individual's presentation of 'self' and construction of reality through social interactions. Ti can be seen as the on-going process of change and development teachers go through as they constantly re-appraise their role within the organisation, with students and their values and beliefs in relation to education (Jeffrey and Woods 1996; Keltchermans 2005; Boylan & Woolsey 2015). The literature review (chapter two) outlines different aspects of the concept in order to further understanding of Ti in relation to the study. As well as influencing the main research question, the defining features of Ti influenced the design and development of the research methodology (discussed in chapter three).

Chapter two will fully explore the concept of Ti in relation to the main study question. This will be important to the development of the work and will involve reviewing the inter-linking nature of the relationship between Ti and the other key concepts utilised within the study. The chapter will aim to highlight what the literature tells us about the relationships between individual teachers, the colleges they work for and the wider political context in FE in order to provide shape and focus to the study in relation to the main question.

The concepts identified as important in relation to the study question include the relationship between **teacher agency** (the second key concept in the study) and social structure. Fenwick (2006) defines agency as the 'means to make occupational choices concerning one's core work and interests'. Further to this, Vähäsantanen (2015) points to it being dynamic, fluid and impacted by the characteristics of the individual and the nature of the social setting. In comparison, structure can be seen as the 'recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limit the choices and opportunities available' (Barker 2005, p448). As outlined, since incorporation, successive governments have attempted to exert control over FE by introducing a wide range of neo liberal policy initiatives which have limited the freedom of teachers through the application of structure to almost every aspect of college life (Randle and Brady 1997).

More recently, the use of managerial controls including performance management systems and graded lesson observations have sought to influence the behaviour of teachers in the work place (Hamilton 2007 and O'Leary 2013). New regimes of audit through Ofsted (The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) have been introduced by

the government in order, they argue, to determine what is and is not good practice. This contested approach has been reflected in changes to the culture of colleges with a far higher degree of managerial direction being imposed to meet the output based measures of student success, retention and achievement. In turn, this has reduced the capacity of teachers to enact their own-values and priorities in relation to education (Williams 2003).

At a macro (environmental) level the literature identifies changes to the nature of **professionalism within FE** (the third key concept), which Ball (2003) refers to as creating a culture of 'performativity', encompassing:

a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic) (2003, p.216).

Professionalism can be seen as the meeting point or intersection between agency and structure, where the two opposing forces are played out by teachers as they seek to ascribe value and prioritise between competing activities and notions of professionalism. According to Avis (2003) the government have shaped Ti by attempting to control the freedom of a teacher by transmitting a hegemonic view of the role and influencing the debate around what being professional means.

The marketization of FE is the fourth interconnected concept within the study, in particular the use of private sector market principles within FE colleges. This approach has been characterised by an underlying politically motivated neoliberal ideology (Davies 2017), which at a macro level has involved focusing on efficiency and reducing costs as a

mechanism to drive change within colleges. It has been tightly controlled through a funding mechanism, which has incentivised institutions to adopt particular behaviours (Clarke and Newman 1997). However, the approach was not truly reflective of a market, where the forces of supply and demand are responsive to price (Welch & Welch 2013) and the utility (*value*) that individuals give to a particular product/service. Instead, government funding targets have been used to control and direct the supply and demand of provision within local areas and to incentivise colleges to alter teacher pay and conditions (Shain and Gleeson 1999). Further to this, from incorporation onwards FE has been beset by constant changes in policy direction, funding methodology and place within the education market, which have created a lack of strategic focus and created a 'quasi market' (Lucas and Crowther 2016).

Smith (2007) describes a 'quasi-market' as an 'engineered competitive environment that is superimposed over existing public-sector services' (p54). He contends that they bring with them 'the inference that the existing, non-marketised structure requires reform' (p54) and this reveals the ideological assumptions that underpin this approach towards controlling education. Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000), discuss the pre incorporation culture of benign liberal paternalism being replaced by a 'quasi-market' economy, while Le Grand refers to the state no longer being both the funder and the provider of services, instead it has become primarily a 'funder, purchasing services from a variety of private, voluntary and public providers, all operating in competition with one another' (1991, p.1257). This began following incorporation with a focus on breaking the 'Silver Book' FE teaching contract through financial incentives and the development of an output based funding methodology (Smith 2015). It meant colleges were encouraged to focus on results (*product*), potentially

reducing the focus on the (*process*) of education. This ideology is founded on the principles of an unfettered market where the notion of 'public good' is replaced by individual responsibility and competition (Hall and O'Shea 2013). Lucas and Crowther go further and suggest that the logic of incorporation has taken on a life of its own and has blocked innovation and educational change, 'making it impossible for FE colleges to find stability or resolve important areas including the strategic place and purpose of FE' (2016, p.584).

From a theoretical perspective, the marketization of FE will be explored using market theory as a lens through which to analyse the relationship between the state and education. Market theory as outlined by Kirzner (2011) provides a framework and set of concepts for analysis at a macro, meso and micro level. Chapter two will consider the technical aspects of market conditions in an FE context as well as the espoused political and ideological arguments about the marketization of FE (Avis 2003).

At a meso (organisational) level, the study will examine the extent to which market competition is possible amongst colleges and other providers, particularly with regard to 'differentiation' the ability of colleges to differentiate themselves from each other (Kotler 2015). Marketization has fundamentally altered what is valued within education (Jephcote and Salisbury 2007 & Jephcote et al. 2008) and the nature of different college relationships (Goodson 1995), particularly the student teacher relationship, with students now referred to as '*customers*' or '*consumers*' and teachers being required to focus on customer/consumer satisfaction and educational outputs. The tension between the competing forces outlined; namely quantitative output focused learner measures, as against a teacher's freedom to act in ways which support their own knowledge, values and beliefs concerning the development of learners, will be central to this study.

1.3 Rationale for the study

The study aims to contribute to the field of research on Ti by examining the impact of the marketization of the sector. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), Gleeson (2005) and Jephcote and Salisbury (2008 & 2009; Jephcote et al. 2009) all refer to Ti and the role of teachers within FE being under researched. Further to this, Jephcote and Salisbury refer to there being much less research about the '*working lives*' of experienced teachers (2008, p.163) and the impact of the imposition of market conditions on Ti (Beck 2008). The purposive sample being used within the study will provide an opportunity to capture the identity stories of teachers and managers from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, as they develop, and maintain their professional identities against the backdrop of an ever changing policy environment. These stories are unique (Sfard and Prusak 2005) and provide individual accounts of the working lives of teachers within different environments.

Further to this, I aim to use visual metaphors and narrative as they provide an opportunity to capture the uniqueness of individual teacher stories, which Johnson (2001) and Johnson (2007) discuss being difficult to uncover using other research methods. The study will look at the strategies adopted by teachers in response to the changes outlined (Gleeson and James 2007, Orr 2012 and Trent 2014) as they negotiate and develop their identities. Teachers use these strategies to innovate, mediate, resist, creatively comply and completely comply with the predominant organisational culture and in turn they will form, shape and potentially transform the culture of the organisation (Colley et.al 2007). Developing further understanding concerning the contexts and use of strategies adopted by different participants will be an important contribution of this study.

FE colleges are still undergoing significant change, which is impacting both funding and the confidence of institutions and the sector (Wolf 2015). This was evidenced within the current funding cuts, which have affected the sector since 2010 (Keep 2014 and Hodgson and Spours 2017), and coincided with the two year data collection period of this study. The cuts have continued unabated until the time of writing and had the potential to impact participants within the study.

These issues have been consistently highlighted for over two decades since incorporation by academics and government sponsored reports highlighting the need for improvement in the FE sector. A recent national survey of more than one thousand college leaders, teachers and other sector professionals showed that more than two thirds of participants were concerned about government funding, with over ninety percent being worried about the pace and volume of change and external bureaucracy. (The Great FE and Skills Survey 2014). This study will aim to provide individual accounts of the impact of this on-going changing environment on teachers and managers and how they perceive their roles.

1.4 Contextualising the researcher's position

When considering the origin of the aims for the study, I considered the impact of five distinct work related experiences on shaping and developing my identity as a teacher and my ontology as a researcher. These were also distinct periods of time involving different working practices, organisational cultures and relationships with colleagues. First there was the influence of my experience in retail management, working in a prestigious retail

organisation in London. The organisation had a real sense of the meaning and importance of quality and brand image, it understood how the perception of the organisation influenced the beliefs/values and working practices of staff. This period within the private sector also gave me a feel for the effective operation of market competition, which was useful experience prior to the so called marketization of FE post incorporation. In particular, the huge differentiation between products within the store, catering for an almost endless range of customer needs. Coupled to this, staff, were provided scope to individualise their contribution to the organisation and this had a very positive effect on motivation and productivity.

The second distinct period of time involved working in FE for five years prior to incorporation and its impact on my own development as a teacher. The pre-incorporation culture in the college I worked in focused on nurturing and developing newly qualified teachers, who all received a year of support and mentoring after appointment with an experienced member of staff. This process helped inform my development as a teacher and imbued my practice with a particular set of values focused on the centrality of teaching and learning. It also gave me the opportunity and professional space within which to explore how my skills, values and personality traits could be utilised as a teacher. This second period of time shaped and influenced my attitudes and beliefs in relation to education, it also gave me a 'feel' for the importance of the process of education prior to the cultural changes in FE post-incorporation (Ball 2008).

The reforms saw a shift in the allocation of resources with colleges using new financial freedoms to significantly increase executive salaries and other benefits such as company

cars, while at my own college this was accompanied by a complete lack of resources for teachers, even down to the supply of white board markers. During this period of change in the mid-1990s, I became a union activist and this became an important third area of experience. I saw first-hand the impact of what has been termed new public management NPM (Smith and O'Leary 2013) on teachers' careers and lives. Working with staff in a union capacity showed me the potential influence of government policy on organisational culture.

As a retired teacher trainer with over twenty five years' experience working with trainees, I saw first-hand the journeys they undertake within the first few years of working in FE. This often involved struggling to develop individual ontologies against a regime of compliance and control. Many trainees discussed being forced to mould their view of the teaching role within the neo liberal control structure that limited scope to develop individual notions of teaching as a profession. For many staff with previous vocational backgrounds, this view of teaching was very different to the professional values that they had previously developed. Equally, for trainees with limited vocational experience the college view of the teaching role often clashed with their own values and beliefs. This fourth area of experience gave me an insight into the importance of teacher development on Ti.

My own positioning has also been informed through experience as a trainee researcher within the field of brand equity in marketing. My then supervisor was firmly rooted in the logical positivist tradition and this had clear implications for the stance I was expected to take within my research. Given the nature of my supervision, the proof of the hypotheses involved measuring the statistical significance of particular relationships outlined within my

model. It always concerned me that I was trying to develop a generalisable model based on the perceptions of brands within individual consumers' minds (Keller 2012). Such perceptions are subjective (Aaker 2010) and history has shown these can alter very rapidly (de-Chernatony and McDonald 2003). I always felt that given the subjective nature of such social situations, that the best my model would be able to do was provide an indication of potential tendencies, as opposed to having any great predictive quality. In fact within brand equity research, I was unable to identify any model, which was actually used by practitioners in the way that the design parameters suggested to predict the future equity of a particular brand. This positioning is highlighted by Habermas who argues that a fundamental problem in social science is '*the relationship between theory and practice*' (1974, p.18), in particular, that the domination of positivism makes it difficult for individuals to critically reflect on current forms of domination, since they appear as problems which are only 'solvable' by technical means.

These five distinct experiences have helped shape my values and beliefs as a teacher and researcher and influenced the design and scope of this study. Further to these experiences, my own positioning in relation to the study was also influenced by my role as an insider researcher (Smyth and Holian 2008) within one of the organisations, and latterly the merged college being used as a focus for this research. This gave me an insight into the post-incorporation changes affecting the colleges and their responses to this new environment. This helped to provide a background and context to the effect of marketization at a meso organisational level.

1.5 Undertaking the study

As well as shaping my ontological perspective, the experiences outlined are reflected in my view of what constitutes knowledge within a social setting and my methodological choices. In particular, it was important for me that participants within the study benefit from taking part in the research through critically reflecting on their own practice. For this reason I aim to use a participatory approach towards undertaking the research. An important aspect of this is ensuring participant perceptions are placed at the centre of the research frame.

MacLure (1993) points to identities being developed through 'discursive practices' as part of a teacher's biography and that there is now an acceptance of the use of biography, autobiography, life history, narrative and anecdote in research on Ti.

The study is set within an interpretive paradigm, which sees knowledge development being inextricably linked to 'the subjective world of human experience' (Cohen and Manion 1989, p.43). Interpretivism is derived from the humanities placing an 'emphasis on holistic, qualitative and interpretive approaches' (Husen 1999, p.32). It seeks to get inside the individual being researched, without the imposition of external form and structure, since this reflects the view point of the observer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved (Lankshear and Knobel 2004). Delanty, further highlights these distinctions when he refers to social reality as a 'meaningful construction and not an objective reality' (1997, p.40).

This approach provides participants with the opportunity to reflect on their own practice by having an intrinsic engagement in and ownership of the research process (Bryman 1996). It sees the interaction between the researcher and the teacher as key in knowledge development. For interpretivists, these subjective, ever changing, social interactions are

knowledge in that they are all that the researcher can observe and identify (Hammersley 1993).

Van Mannen (1994) refers to personal biographies on Ti being used to promote 'self-awareness' and providing what Casey (1993) describes as the 'political impetus for on-going action' (p.158). The researcher and participants become involved in a process of reflexive abstraction, which Blatchford and Blatchford refer to as a mechanism of cognitive equilibrium, where perception of 'novelty, disequilibrium or disturbance provides the motor for the process of learning' (1997, p. 238). Reflexivity can be conceived as key to the learning process in educational research and is constantly being refined by the relationship between theorising and observation (Greenbank 2003). The methodology used within this study aims to encourage this reflexive approach in participants, with a view to providing opportunities for transformative learning, which Mezirow (1996) suggests is the 'social process of construing a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to action' (p222-223).

1.6 Structure of the Thesis

Following on from this introductory chapter, Chapter Two will provide a more detailed review of the literature on Ti and the three research concepts, detailing their inter-linking nature and relevance in relation to the main study question. The introductory section will outline and develop the defining characteristics of Ti, which will be built on in subsequent sections to present an understanding of the relationship between the individual teacher and the wider organisational and political context within FE. This will include reviewing the

conceptualisations of professional/ism and the debate between teacher agency and social structure and how this informs teachers of the priorities given to different aspects of their roles. It will also include developing an understanding of the changes within the sector due to marketization, which began at incorporation, but have continued unabated in different guises to the completion of this study. The influences of wider government policy will be explored along with the lack of market conditions within the FE quasi-market and its impact on individual teacher identities. The chapter will also discuss the influence of levels of experience and different organisational roles on Ti. The end of the chapter will provide a summary of the literature review, highlighting key ideas and relationships to begin to develop a conceptualisation of Ti in an FE context.

Chapter Three will provide a more detailed discussion of the researcher's chosen methodology, research methods and justify their value as research tools given the interpretivist nature of the study. The development of the research instruments will be outlined, along with the findings of the pilot study. The chapter will conclude with a discussion around the final research design and the development of the key themes linked to the main study question and key research concepts.

Chapter Four will present the findings of the study through a selection of visual metaphors and narrative case studies of participants linked to the key themes emerging from the analysis. The cases will provide an insight into the key debates developed in chapter two in relation to the main study question. They will provide examples of the identities and working lives of teachers and teacher managers.

Chapter Five will provide a discussion of Conclusions linked to the main research question and areas of interest and will outline a working conceptualisation of identity within the FE context of this study. The conceptual representation will be a development of the concepts and ideas drawn from the literature, which will be developed and added to through the analysis and findings of the study. The conceptualisation will outline a variety of potential responses by individual teachers to the external micro/ meso (organisational) and macro (governmental) influences outlined within the study. The responses adopted by the individuals reflect their personal capacity (see section 2.6) and the nature of their evaluation within a given situation in an organisational context. The study will explore how these responses enable or restrict the individual to enact their identity as a teacher. The conceptualisation will provide a summative understanding of Ti in relation to the study utilising both the literature and the findings of the study to produce a working conceptualisation of Ti in an FE context.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction and overview

This chapter will provide an extended discussion of the key concepts and literature outlined in the introduction. Following this introduction, each section will further develop different aspects of the four key concepts of the study outlined in chapter one. Each concept will be explored along with its associated literature and the interlinking nature of many of the aspects of Ti will be discussed throughout the chapter. The review will outline the importance of narrative, biography and metaphors to the development of the study, particularly in relation to providing individualistic participant accounts linked to the main research question. It will outline the contested notion of what it means to be a professional in FE and the impact of post reform changes on the agency of teachers.

My literature review began during the early stages of the EdD programme and was the development of a long held interest in teacher development and the way in which teachers ascribe meaning to different situations. I began by reviewing the general literature on identity using the Swetswise database to access a very wide range of journals. These initial searches were useful in helping to develop a broad understanding of the topic area and establish links to a number of strands in the literature. The searches identified Ti as a distinct concept and strand of literature and revealed the importance of a number of inter-related concepts on the development of Ti. The initial searches also produced further

distinctions between the body of research on Ti from a school perspective and the literature associated with the FE sector.

These more refined searches were useful in identifying and developing a number of areas of associated literature, notably the key concepts, teacher agency, professionalism and the impact of post incorporation changes on Ti. Further to this, access to the Solo search engine at the University of Oxford has further enhanced the review linked to more recent literature on the main research concepts and the research methodology and methods being used. A wide variety of books have been downloaded using google scholar and purchased for the study. Often these have been associated with key writers, concepts and models or via recommendation, particularly from my supervision team. In combination these approaches have produced a rich variety of literature which has aided the development of the study.

2.2 Defining Identity and its centrality to the study

2.2.1 Different conceptualisations

Early literature on identity is useful in setting the scene for reviewing Ti as it forms the basis for later conceptualisations. The literature on identity plays a central role in psychology and sociology with early psychology literature focusing on psychological development in relation to notions of the self and personality (Marcia 1980). In this context, identity is viewed in relation to the development of the individual, particularly into adulthood and psychological problems and issues associated with this process of change (Rothbaum et.al 1982).

In comparison, sociology has been concerned with the reciprocal relationship between the self and society (Stryker 1980) and how we understand society by understanding the self. McCall & Simmons (1978) refer to the self-influencing society through the actions of individuals creating groups, organisations, networks and institutions. Reciprocally, society influences the self through its shared language and meanings and engagement in social interaction. This process of reflexivity constitutes the core of identity from a sociological perspective, because the self is always reflective of society and the self is acting in a social context in which other selves exist (Stryker 1980).

The debate about the relationship between structure and agency serves to further illustrate some of the differences between the two fields (Giddens 1984). As outlined, for sociologists individuals are able to act reflexively to enact their own beliefs and values in social situations and this shows the ability to have agentic control over their actions (Cote and Levine 2013). In comparison, for many psychologists, these behaviours are more deterministic with the individual exerting less conscious control over behaviour (Cote and Schwartz 2002). It could be argued that the first approach 'neglects internal dynamics of self-processes, while the second neglects ways in which external social structures impinge on the internal processes' (Stryker and Burke 2000, p.285). Developing a better understanding of the processes of individual change outlined will be important to the development of this study and link directly to the main question.

Following on from these introductory comments, more recently, there has been some merging of the literature on identity (Côté and Schwartz 2002), which has resulted in the development of a number of multi-disciplinary models. One proposed by Gee (2001) (**Figure One**) is outlined here as encompassing all the key elements to make it suitable for application within an educational context. Namely, it allows for a focus on both the individual and the individual within social contexts. Gee separates these out very succinctly:

- i) *we are what we are primarily because of our "natures", through to ii) we are what we are primarily because of the positions we occupy in society, to iii) we are what we are primarily because of our individual accomplishments as they are inter- actionally recognized by others and finally iv) we are what we are because of the experiences we have had within certain sorts of "affinity groups" (2001, p.100).*

Gee also makes the point that:

it is crucial to realize that these four perspectives are not separate from each other. Both in theory and in practice they interrelate in complex and important ways. Rather than discrete categories, they are ways to focus our attention on different aspects of how identities are formed and sustained' (2001, p.101)

These distinctions are useful in helping us to begin to develop an understanding of identity as a concept and going forward beginning to consider the specific features of Ti.

Figure One - Four Ways to View Identity

Process	Power	Source of power
1. Nature-identity:	a state developed from	forces in nature
2. Institution-identity:	a position authorized by	authorities within institutions
3. Discourse-identity:	an individual trait recognized in the discourse	of/with "rational" dialogue individuals
4. Affinity-identity:	experiences shared in the Practice	of "affinity groups"

(Gee 2001, p.100)

2.2.2 Defining Ti as a distinct concept.

Further to defining identity, Ti can be seen as a distinct theme in the literature (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009) focused on a specific role (being a teacher) and the relationships and influences related to the role. These include the professional values and beliefs associated with teaching and their application to the job role and influence on motivation and self-esteem (Gleeson et al. 2005). It also includes the importance of teacher biographies and how these can be seen to impact on career trajectories (Day et al. 2006). Some of these distinctions can be seen in the model proposed by Keltchermans, which identifies the importance of five inter-related parts which make up the professional self.

These include:

- Self-image: how teachers describe themselves through their career stories;

- Self-esteem: the evolution of self as a teacher, as defined by self or others;
- Job-motivation: what makes teachers choose, remain committed to or leave the job;
- Task perception: how teachers define their jobs;
- Future perspective: teachers' expectations for the future development of their jobs

(Kelchtermans 1993, pp. 449–450)

Although the work of Gee and Keltchermans demonstrate several similarities, (both distinguish between the self and external environment and both also consider the influence of organisations on the individual and the importance of discourse and relationships with others on self-esteem and motivation), they also have important distinguishing features. The model proposed by Keltchermans is an applied version of identity formation as it has a distinct focus directly related to the role of being a teacher, highlighting the importance of teacher biography in the development of Ti and future perspectives on the development of career trajectories.

Further to this, the work of Beauchamp and Thomas was also useful in helping to consider the similarities and differences between the defining qualities of Ti, as opposed to identity. They cite Sachs as a useful starting point in defining Ti:

Teacher professional identity then stands at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society. Importantly, teacher identity is not something that is fixed nor is it imposed;

rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience (Sachs, 2001, p.15)

Beauchamp and Thomas make the point that this view of Ti 'not only points to its importance in the profession, but also to the multiple dimensions of identity in the inclusion of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' as elements for attention' (2009, p.178).

Building on the work of Keltchermans (1993, 1996 & 2005), Gee (2001) and Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) this review has identified the following five features, which are useful in helping us to define Ti in relation to this study. The *first*, outlined by several writers (Day et.al 2006; Little & Bartlett 2002) is that identity is seen as central to an individual's role as a teacher encompassing a sense of belonging, notions of commitment, values and emotions regarding teaching and education. Britzman points out that 'role speaks to function whereas identity voices investments and commitments' (1991, p.29). The notions of commitment and investments are an important part of what it means to be professional and these are developed further in section 2.7.

The literature also identifies the importance of two-way communication in which teachers negotiate and re-negotiate their identities as actors through discourse. This *second* facet is discussed in much of the social/psychological conceptualisations of identity (Cote and Levine 2002) and is undertaken as part of the individual's biography (MacLure 1993). This two-way process can also refer to the various meanings someone can attach to oneself or the

meanings attributed to oneself by others' (Beijaard 1995, p.284). This points to the importance of relationships and how these are experienced and interpreted in developing Ti. Within an FE context NPM has encouraged the development of more directive management styles with one way communication (Green 2011), potentially affecting the ability of the individual teacher to negotiate their Ti within a managerial discourse.

Ti is also seen as a continuous process of becoming, as opposed to a process of being. This *third* aspect suggests Ti does not just involve formation at the start of a career, but as Taylor (2001) highlights is a transformative process throughout teachers' careers. This is outlined in the main study question and is discussed by Cooper and Olson (1996) and Reynolds (1996) who note that teachers' personal and professional identities are 'constantly being reconstructed through the historical, cultural, sociological and psychological influences which all shape the meaning of being a teacher' (p.83). Britzman (1991), argues that 'Learning to teach, like teaching itself is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become' (p.8). Key to this process of formation and transformation is the relationship between the individual and the wider external environment in negotiating their identity, with many writers like Giddens (1984) discussing an individual's agency as a facet in the formation of Ti. This *fourth* defining feature sees the individual teacher as an agentive being, affected by a variety of external inter-personal, organisational, cultural and macro factors which help to shape and exert an influence on the development of Ti. Miller Marsh (2003) describes this interweaving of the social and the individual as being 'continually in the process of fashioning and refashioning our identities by patching together fragments of the discourses to which we are

exposed' (p. 8). This can involve being positioned within pre-existing discourses and social conversations (Davies & Harre 1990) and points to us not just forming our identities through discourses we are involved in but those which are 'given to us by others within the different contexts we operate in' (Gee 2001, p.99). However, individuals as agentive beings are constantly in search of 'new social and linguistic resources which allow them to resist identities that position them in undesirable ways' (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 27) and these may well provide the impetus for change and development. Reviewing how teachers respond to these meso and macro level organisational and wider governmental influences will be important within this study.

The *fifth* and final aspect identified within the literature is that Ti can be seen as context specific, with teachers having both a core individual identity and multiple identities within different contexts and communities that the individual is exposed to, or has membership of. At a basic level, Gee (2001) recognizes that identity suggests a 'kind of person' within a particular context; while one might have a 'core identity', there are multiple forms of this identity as one operates across different contexts (p. 99). The emphasis is on the multifaceted nature of identity and its changing shape in terms of external influences. The four different identity contexts outlined in figure one are useful in considering how identity may change on the part of the individual and or the focus of the context. For example, an individual may have an institution identity derived from a position recognised by authority, which is very different to an affinity identity they have as part of an association with a social club they choose to be involved in.

2.2.3 Summary

So we can look at Ti as a label that encompasses the collection of influences and effects that become 'intertwined inside the flow of activity as a teacher simultaneously reacts to and negotiates given contexts and human relationships at given moments' (Olson 2008 p.139). It is also important to recognise the limitations of any definitions which attempt to capture the complete identity of any individual. Connolly (2002) points to there being more in his life than any official definition of identity can express;

I am not exhausted by my identity. I am not entirely captured by it, even though it is stamped upon me and even though it enables me. This fugitive difference between my identity and that in me which slips through its conceptual net is to be prized; it forms a pool from which creativity can flow and attentiveness to the claims of other identities might be drawn (2002, p.120)

This links to perhaps the most important element in relation to this study, that Ti is located in discursive practices and that these provide the dynamic for change in an individual's identity. These notions suggest that teacher identity is a dynamic and not a static concept. This section has developed an understanding of the defining features of Ti, which will be built on in the remaining sections in relation to the study question.

The next two sections will further develop the notion of Ti being dynamic, changing and contested within social situations by exploring the influence of narrative, metaphors and biography on the development of Ti. This will be followed by reviewing the relationship between the individual and the organisation focusing on teacher agency and its impact on Ti

in different decision making contexts. The final section will discuss changing notions of professionalism within the FE sector and the potential impact of different values and priorities in relation to the teaching role on an individual's Ti.

2.3 Teacher identity development - The importance of narrative and metaphors

As outlined in the previous section, identity is seen as located in discursive practices where language constructs reality rather than simply reflecting it (Lasky 2005 and Van Oers 2002). Therefore qualities such as truth, validity and identity are played out through interaction and language and are matters to be claimed and defended in discourse, rather than being properties that reside in people or data (Vähäsantanen et al. 2008, p.132).

This dynamic of identity formation is highlighted by Varaki (2007) who feels human beings and story-telling are intertwined. He cites Andrews (2000) who defines stories as not only the way we ascribe significance to experiences, but also as one of the primary ways in which we 'constitute our very selves' (p.77). Importantly, we not only construct our own narrative and biographies, but as highlighted by Gee (2001) our identities are affected by how our narratives are re told and the narratives and discourses given to us by others. In this sense, the differences between the author and the recipient of the communication constitute a potential re-storying or 'death of the author' (Barthes 1967) as the story and meaning associated with it are re-told by the recipient. Barthes feels that the re-interpretation by readers of any written narrative means that the original interpretation of the author is no longer the only interpretation. In essence every narrative or story will be interpreted

differently by those involved in the communication process. He argues that in the act of writing, the language itself becomes the instrument of transmission, as the author is removed from the text (Barthes 1977). He uses the example of a Greek tragedy, the play full of double meanings is interpreted by the reader and it is this act of interpretation that gives 'meaning to each individual, the reader, or in this case the listener' (p.148). Key to this process of change is the use of metaphors within a narrative, which position the characters and intended meanings within the story.

Martinez et al. (2001) highlight the importance of metaphors in establishing relationships and meanings between different objects and how these position the characters within the narrative. They identify three distinct categories of metaphor within their research which are useful in developing our discussion. These include behaviourist/empiricist metaphors, which view learning as an accommodation of associations from past experiences. Cognitive metaphors, which see knowledge development as a process of actively constructing and re-constructing schemata based on experiences and processes of the mind. They also outline socio-historic metaphors, which see knowledge as not just in the mind, but as something that is distributed amongst individuals in a social community.

All of the categories align with our defining features of Ti, as well as drawing into distinction the sociological and psychological views of identity adopted for this study discussed earlier. The final category of metaphors highlights the importance of physical experience as a mediating factor between the mind and the social processes involved in

discourse. This inter-play between individual cognition and the impact of social situations and external factors on Ti will be explored in a variety of strands through the study; importantly section (2.6.3) will identify specific aspects of this process to begin to enable us to understand how individual teachers make decisions within the contested FE environment outlined.

The interplay outlined was exemplified by Sumison (2002) in a seven year case study using visual metaphors as a way of following one teacher's journey from development as a trainee to their eventual departure from the profession. The change in nature of the metaphors reflected the many aspects of identity a teacher can go through. One of the later metaphors relevant to this study showed a choking vine around a plant, reflecting the tension the teacher felt between external factors and their own Ti. Similarly, Johnson (2001) highlights the changing metaphors of pre-service teachers, who discuss the importance of the rite of passage into the profession and the tension between the enthusiasm to gain knowledge and experience, which is tempered by the behaviour of students.

Further to this, Griffiths and Macloud (2008) discuss how narrative has been used to inform policy and for many narratives are epistemologically the most authentic way to understand teaching from the viewpoint of the teacher (Connelly and Clandinin 1999, Clandinin and Connelly 2000 and Lyons & LaBoskey 2002). MacLure (1993) argues that this has led to the acceptance of the use of biography, autobiography, life history, narrative and anecdote

(p.311) and several studies have revealed the actual process of changing and developing identities, which show their dynamic nature.

Important to these social processes are the roles that individual actors play within the social space where the narratives are being constructed. Within an FE setting these can be organisational positions, teacher, manager or student, or they can also involve the imposition of an ideology which aims to reconstitute the importance and focus of different aspects of the teachers' role (Ball 2007). The notion of power is a useful one to help further develop this discussion. What are the stories that are given credence and value? How are these re-communicated and transmitted within the organisation? Pringle (2001) points to competing discourses within a discursive space, particularly where individual narratives and biographies come into contact with wider organisational or governmental discourses. Within an FE context, the re-positioning of teachers, by the state, (Gleeson and James 2007) represents an important element in the tension and dynamic of how teachers determine the importance of different aspects of their roles.

This positioning enables us to understand the significance of a narrative by interpreting the relationships and meanings associated with the characters. This is referred to by Lucas and Crowther (2016) who discuss the reduced importance of teaching and learning within FE because it is not a strategic focus within the sector. This links directly to the central question of this study also highlighted by Jeffrey and Wood (1996) namely; the potential influence of

a dominant external government discourse within the education sector to subjugate individual teacher narratives (This will be further explored in section 2.6).

2.4 The importance of teacher development and Biography on Ti

This sub-section will develop the importance of an individual's experience and how this is constructed to form their biography (Avis and Bathmaker 2006) in explaining how teachers undertake their work in classrooms and in the formation of their professional identities.

Biography is seen as a distinct element of Ti formation and development, which is in part influenced by occupational experience as distinct from experience as a teacher. Robson (1998) refers to this as dual professionalism and the values and beliefs associated with vocational experience can also impact expectations set for learners.

Part of the individual's biography and Ti is linked to the set of social relations to which they are exposed (Colley et al. 2003) and these are not just within an institution, but the broader set of social relations within particular occupations for which vocational courses are preparing learners. They explore the idea of learning as a process of 'becoming', that is, a process of developing membership and identity. Drawing on Bourdiesian theory Colley argues that this process, involves an orientation to and an interaction with existing forms of 'vocational habitus', and that 'sets of dispositions [are] derived from both idealised and realised identities, and informed by the notions and guiding ideologies of the vocational culture.' (2002, p. 493). This view of identity development is very dynamic and reveals some of the complexity of Ti, showing the potential of biography to influence Ti. It also provides

an insight into the cultures and practices of particular occupations, which are co-constructed by students and teachers who interact with the dominant educational discourses and managerialist cultures within colleges

The work of Sammons et al. (2007) and Day et al. (2006) outlines the importance of different career phases on an individual's biography. They identify six career phases (**Appendix One**) each with distinct characteristics, which give an insight into different influences on teachers. This allowed the researchers to consider the impact of age and experience on job 'motivation, job fulfilment, commitment and self-efficacy' (2006, p.687). The VITAE study The variations in teachers' work lives and their effects on pupils (Day et al. 2006) was commissioned by the DfES between 2001 and 2005 and builds on earlier work undertaken by Huberman *'The lives of teachers'* (1993) and Sikes et al. (1985), both of whom identify the importance of teacher trajectories in the development of career life phases. For Day, this begins with the professional life stage 0-3 years, which Huberman terms 'entering the profession and the first years' (Bayer et al. 2009). This is characterised by issues of commitment and efficacy linked to teaching, which can either be an 'easy' or 'painful' beginning' Huberman (1993, p.91). This stage is influenced by the development of positive relationships with the pupils taught and with colleagues and managers. The outcome of this first career stage has an impact on further career life phases, each with distinct aspects revealed by the study. These include the balancing of professional and personal commitments, developing efficacy, particularly within the classroom and maintaining motivation. Day concludes that 'supportive cultures are of crucial importance to teachers' sense of effectiveness across all six professional life phases' (p. 117), while also highlighting

the importance of key events and specific changes over time on the trajectory of teachers' careers. They point to school culture and support mechanisms available in forming one of two main trajectories:

a) those who would enjoy career advancement with increased self-efficacy

b) those who would suffer a declining sense of efficacy which led to a change of school or career

(Day et al. 2006, p.91)

The model they developed distinguishes between the formation of different types of identity **(figure Two)** based on positive or negative trajectories. It suggests that Ti can be stable or unstable and lead to positive or negative behaviours. In the model stability is the tension between the ability of the individual to enact their identity as a teacher and the extent to which this is tempered by the predominant culture of the institution and the relationships with colleagues, managers and learners.

Although the model is useful in allowing us to consider a number of variables and their effect on an individual's identity, the literature draws attention to the difficulty in accurately mapping the relationship between an individual's attitude towards a particular object and their subsequent behaviour (Eagly and Chaiken 2007). They provide an umbrella definition of attitude, which they define as 'a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour' (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 1).

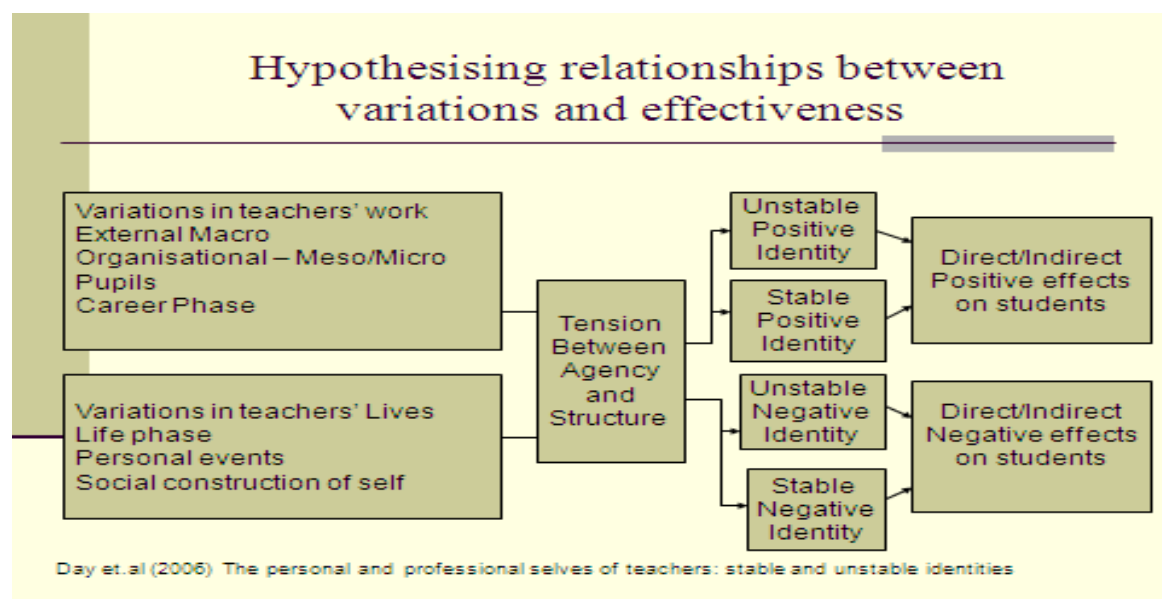
They discuss the difficulties with establishing the relationship between an individual's

attitude towards something (termed the attitude object) and their subsequent behaviour.

Further to this, Conner and Armitage (1998) cite the influence of other variables such as past experience as opposed to current cognitions in influencing a particular behaviour, and these considerations are important in that they make us question the suggestion of a relationship between an individual's identity and subsequent negative or positive impact on students.

These variables will be further developed in section 2.6 to build on the model proposed by Day.

Figure Two



As well as changes through age and experience, the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) on communities of practice is useful in further developing a wider notion of the impact of teacher biography. They propose that communities of practice involve a set of relations among people, over time and with the wider environment, where participants 'share

understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means for their lives and for their communities' (Lave and Wenger, 2002, p.115). They review the importance of the biographies of the members of a community and interactions within the community on the trajectories and development of the identities of the community (Lave and Wenger 1991). Their work sees the process of identity development as part of a complex mix of interactions within the community, where novices who join a community learn as part of a process of 'legitimate peripheral participation' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.29). This term denotes the importance of participating in the activities of the group as a way of 'learning', while at the same time the 'peripheral' emphasis highlights the reduced expectation of novices, who over time may move towards more intensive participation through experience and the development of skills. They argue that integrating into a community involves becoming a certain kind of person, which occurs through observation and imitation, as opposed to instruction. How do experienced members 'walk, talk, work, conduct their lives, how do outsiders interact with it, how and when and about what old-timers collaborate, and what they enjoy, dislike and respect' (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.95). In this sense learning is seen as 'actively co-constructed by teachers and students' (Colley et al. 2003, p.476) in interaction with particular learning cultures and communities of practice. This emphasises the dynamic of Ti referred to in the defining features outlined at the start of this chapter and allows us to consider the importance of social interaction, different narratives and cultures and relationships between staff on the development of Ti.

2.4.1 Summary (sections 2.2, 2.3 & 2.4)

The first three sections of this chapter have developed the distinct elements that enable a conceptualisation of Ti and how it is shaped through discourse and as part of an individual's biography. It is clear that the dynamic referred to earlier as a factor in defining Ti, namely that it is a process of becoming as opposed to being a process of being is evidenced in the literature through the relationships between teachers, their students and the wider organisational environment. The sections on narrative, metaphors and biography have developed ideas and concepts concerning the actual process of Ti development and change through social interaction. The remaining sections of this review will further develop the ideas, concepts and current debates around Ti linked to the remaining three key themes outlined in chapter one; the marketization of education, and the importance of teacher agency and professionalism, building on the first three sections.

2.5 Market forces and the marketization of FE

2.5.1 Introduction

This section will outline the Government strategy of introducing market forces into the FE sector in an attempt to engender efficiency and competition between providers. It will also consider the ideological assumptions behind the changes, and the impact of these on the sector post incorporation. This provides an insight into the changes within FE linked to the study question, which act as a fore-grounding to sections 2.6 and 2.7 which will explore the effects of marketization on individual teachers within the sector. These factors are important in helping to understand the nature of FE, the changes to college structures and focus and the competing pressures and demands on individual teachers.

For the purposes of this project Market theory (Kirzner 2011) will be used as an analytical lens through which to review the nature of marketization of FE and the impact of the changes in the relationship between the state and education in FE post incorporation. It will explore the notion of creating market conditions within FE and whether the sector was able to act effectively as a market, or whether the marketization of the sector was in reality a metaphor for realignment in power relations and control based on a neo liberal agenda for FE (Leitch 2006). Smith makes the point that ‘quasi markets’ ‘have little in common with markets as they are commonly understood. His study revealed them to be a:

centralised policy construct rather than any kind of free standing trading environment. As a context, it was designed to be susceptible to tweaking by policy makers in order to stimulate what was deemed a suitably economised ‘culture’ within FE (Smith 2007, p.40)

2.5.2 The marketised Further Education sector

The FE sector post incorporation has seen huge changes in the level of government involvement and control in almost every aspect of what individual teachers and colleges do. Wolf (2009) describes these changes impacting the FE sector for well over twenty years at an ever-accelerating rate.

further and adult education have been subjected to comprehensive and unprecedented levels of centralised planning, and to sudden and repeated changes. Detailed, expensive and overlapping bureaucratic control has been imposed on all aspects of people’s work, and there has been cavalier destruction of large parts of the sector’s historic and popular provision. Current arrangements undermine innovation and make it completely pointless for ‘providers’ – the government’s favoured term – to undertake any sort of long-term thinking (Wolf 2009, p.28)

More recently in a report aptly titled ‘Heading for the Precipice’ Wolf describes the current position of FE funding:

It is hard to find a single central government budget, and impossible to find another part of the education budget, that has been subject, in this period, to as much deliberate reordering and as many centrally directed changes in exactly how money is spent (Wolf 2015, p.18)

Hodgson and Spours (2015) refer to FE from incorporation being affected by what is commonly termed New Public Management (NPM) and that this is associated with a neo-liberal approach to policy. They point to ‘changes in the nature of governance of the public sector which has focused on the idea of the ‘purchaser/provider split’ and the use of particular forms of accountability and policy levers – e.g. performance measures, inspection, funding - that go hand-in hand with the idea of a marketplace for public services’ (2015, p.4). They argue that although this was intended to enhance quality at lower levels of cost with reduced bureaucracy, it has instead led to a growth in central policy ‘without the benefits of a greater voice for the users or a reduction in bureaucratic processes’ (2015, p.4)

In a similar vein Ranson (2003) makes the point that:

Since the late 1970s such regimes of public accountability have been strengthened systematically so that accountability is no longer merely an important instrument or component within the system, but constitutes the system itself (2003, p. 459)

This supply side intervention began at incorporation with the introduction of a funding methodology developed by the Further Education Funding Council, which released funding for students on the basis of completion of particular aspects of the students programme of study. This involved colleges drawing down payments three times per year with a further payment being linked to achievement. The approach changed the behaviours adopted by colleges to ensure that they maximised funding (Fletcher, Gravatt and Sherlock 2015) and is clear evidence of government adopting a particular approach towards the management of

colleges, which involved supply side control of funding and in turn demand within the sector. More recently, these supply side interventions have included further development and complexity of funding methodologies, particularly for full time 16-18 year old learners where funding became influenced by a wide range of socio economic and previous performance factors. In addition funding was lagged, so performance within year impacted the following year. Although the focus of the formula has changed in the last few years with the introduction of study programmes, with colleges funded on the basis of full time students completing a specific number of hours, which incorporate both a main programme and subsidiary awards, they are still encouraged to work very closely within the prescribed formula to ensure they maximise funding.

Further to these supply side interventions, demand within the sector has been impacted by the almost yearly changes to funding highlighted by Wolf, which have affected the ability of colleges to develop long term plans linked to current and projected consumer numbers within a given catchment area. As Wolf points out:

Since 2006, government has imposed yet another new set of changes in order to create a so-called 'demand-led' set of procedures, the term is unashamedly Orwellian, since the only institution whose 'demand' matters or registers is the government itself (Wolf 2009, p.28).

This is an important statement and begins to develop the concept of government seeing supply side control and regulation as a single option approach to organising the FE sector and college provision. At the same time, the model is couched in terms of a rhetoric, which attempts to link accountability and value for money with devolved powers of decision making at local level. If the official rationale for such reform was to create greater

competition between providers to stimulate improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of public services, Elliot (2001) argues it has impacted on organisational stability, leaving many institutions in a continuous state of fending off impending crises. It has also placed the blame for institutional failure with professionals rather than the centrally created audit culture (Hood et al. 1997). Knights (2002) suggests that government have focused on developing institutional accountability, stimulated by a continuing disenchantment with a public sector policed by what are seen as self-serving professional interests, lacking flexibility and speed in response to rapid global change.

2.5.3 The impact of Government controls on student demand and student choice

The vast majority of full time FE students do not have to pay for the programmes they study as education is free for everyone until the age of eighteen (16 to 19 education: funding guidance, 2013). (Full time students in the colleges within this study account for over eighty percent of total income). This has implications for the nature of competition within FE and the relationship between individual students and colleges.

In principle, FE students have a free choice in terms of where to study and the Government refer to the system as 'demand led'. However in practice, the government controls which qualifications are funded and to some extent 'encourages individuals into particular areas' (OFT 2010, p.42). Full time students are not able to compare one college against another on the basis of price as students do not have to pay directly for their programmes. Secondly, as the funding provided by the government can only be spent on education, students cannot consider other potential products or services that might provide greater satisfaction for their

needs and wants. Economists refer to this as opportunity cost (Kirzner 2011) and it is an essential element in the establishment of any market. In addition to the limitations on price competition within the sector, the centralised control of qualification specifications within FE has led to limited differences between the same awards offered by different awarding bodies, as they are designed to meet a particular standard. This has impacted the ability of colleges to differentiate themselves effectively through tangible differences in their course offerings. As outlined in chapter one, differentiation is important in terms of choice and also allowing individual colleges to develop specialisms based on the skills of staff or particular resources.

The recent wave of more specialised institutions such as Studio Schools, Free Schools, Career Colleges and the recent announcements regarding the funding of specialist colleges to deliver on specific agendas such as HS 2 will not necessarily improve the picture. Keep (2014) argues that the government offering '57 varieties', may not actually benefit the students or different providers. Although there are significant amounts of information available to prospective students, there is a lack of standardised measures on which to compare one college against another (OFT 2010, p.37). Further to this, it is not clear which qualifications are more valuable to employers, and meet local and regional needs (p.15).

If students are unaware of competing offerings then competition between schools and colleges may be more influenced by geography and less by brand image. This is seen in the influence of travel patterns within FE where colleges generally operate within a series of local catchment areas, which are largely defined by travel-to-learn patterns. Learners and employers primarily choose training they can reasonably commute to on a regular basis. As

a consequence, providers recruit the majority of learners from within a short distance (5 miles) of their institution. This pattern is largely consistent across rural and urban areas (BIS, 141, 2013).

2.5.4 The impact of recent funding changes on the nature and future trajectory of markets

The depth of spending reductions on education and training announced by the government in June 2013 represented a substantial shift from the skills policy outlined up until that point. The cuts represented a 25 percent reduction in funding between 2010 and 2014 (Whitaker 2013). The 2013 cuts amounted to another six percent reduction per year for 2014/15 and 2015/16; and if nothing changes, the cuts will amount to a 42.5 percent reduction in funding within FE between 2010 and 2018 (Keep 2014). These changes have influenced the scope and nature of government policy going forward with a recognition of both the failure of many of the existing approaches; this was highlighted by Sharp (2011) who discussed a top-down, targets-driven FE and skills sector not being effective in addition to the need to develop new strategies in the light of a significantly reduced education and skills budget.

The Foster Review (2005), and more recently Ofsted (Wilshaw 2013 & Hodgson et.al 2008) have pointed to a lack of clear focus within FE and underlying the issues outlined are competing visions of what FE is meant to be. Hodgson and Spours (2017) refer to a retrenchment in the sector, principally due to the dramatic funding cuts outlined in conjunction with a reduction in student numbers, due to increased competition from school sixth forms and through work-based study routes. They discuss FE colleges finding it 'difficult to establish their own identity' (2017, p.5) and the sector continuing to be pushed around by government policy and starved of funding. They point to recent changes leading

to even more centralisation, with the formation of a single ministry of funding body with a powerful role for the inspectorate (Ofsted) and the new institute for apprenticeships, but no independent curriculum body. They also argue that continued reliance on national funding, 'despite a growing trend to look to alternative sources, has kept them dancing to the tune of their political masters' (Hodgson and Spours 2015, p.3).

2.5.5 Summary

This section has outlined the lack of certain key conditions to enable a market to operate successfully in FE and create competition. Further to this, it has highlighted the potential motives of the government focusing on control of the sector over and above creating market conditions, revealing the political motivations behind the policies outlined. It is clear from the literature review undertaken for this study that as Lucas and Crowther discuss the logic of incorporation nearly twenty five years later remains unchanged, 'our analysis leads us to conclude that the broad trends and ups and downs of Incorporation did not fundamentally change the logic of Incorporation (2016, p.590). Hodgson and Spours refer to the current position in FE being 'largely the result of the impact of government policy since 2010' (2017, p.3).

This is significant in relation to the study, given the period of time over which the latest budgetary cuts connected to efficiency savings have taken place within the sector, starting in 2010 (Keep 2014), with funding in the sector continuing to cause instability (Hodgson and Spours 2017). This coincided with the data collection period for this study, which took place

in 2010 and 2011. The effects of the cuts also coincided with the redundancies and changes in contractual terms referred to in chapter three (3.5.3) at the merged institutions used within the study. This will be further discussed in chapter five, but allows us to consider the participants within the study potentially being affected by both the post incorporation changes to college cultures and the development of NPM within the sector and the current funding reductions, which had already been in place for two years by the end of the data gathering period.

The almost constant changes that have beset the sector are an important element in understanding the effect of marketization on colleges, changes to institutional cultures and focus and their impact on the lives of individual teachers. These serve to provide an important aspect of the background for undertaking the study, which will be built on in the next two sections looking at the agency of teachers set against the influence of organisations in enabling teachers to enact their identity, and the effects of changes to teacher professionalism on the development of Ti.

2.6 The importance of individual agency and social structure in negotiating teacher identities.

2.6.1 Introduction

This section will further expand the discussion by looking in more detail at the dynamic relationship between the organisation and the teacher as an 'agent' interacting with the external environment. In this sense, as outlined in chapter one, teachers make choices based on their role and personal characteristics and have more or less agency based on how closely

these choices reflect their own values and beliefs. The section will outline a number of writers' views on the factors that can affect the nature of this complex relationship.

2.6.2 Agency and Social Structure

Gleeson and Knights point to the dualism between structure and agency being

reflective of wider social science thinking that has generally led to polarized camps of theorists who either subscribe to a deterministic view that elevates structure over action or follow a voluntarist perspective that privileges subjective agency (2006, p.278).

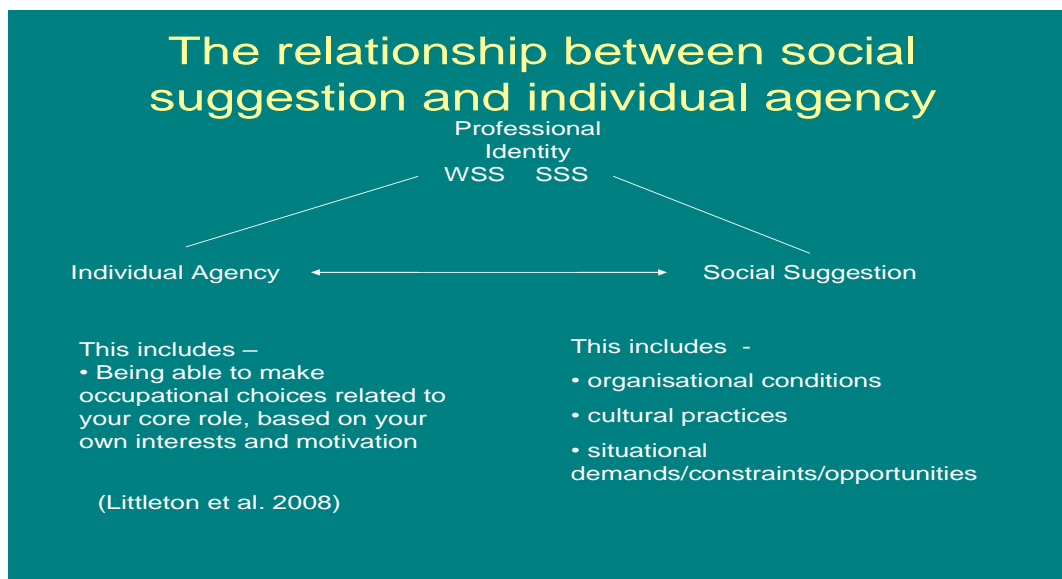
Earlier in this chapter we outlined the idea of teachers as agents and its importance to our socio-psychological definition of Ti. This view sees individuals not just being affected by the social situations to which they are exposed, but also being able to change and reform their Ti through the interactions in which they are involved. This section will develop the notion of teachers as agents discussed as part of the defining features of Ti outlined in the first section and the dynamic and fluid nature of the relationship between the individual and the external factors that influence them at any given time. These factors will be brought together in more detail within section (2.6.3). They serve to signal the positioning within this study regarding the agency structure debate.

Van Oers (2002) discusses the importance of the relationship between individual agency and social structure suggesting Ti is constructed in the course of the negotiation processes. As discussed, the neo liberal ideology associated with the reforms brought with it an attempt to reconstitute what it means to be professional within the sector. This is played out at a meso

and micro level within organisations in different ways and different contexts and in the various interactions between teachers, managers and other college staff. Vähäsantanen et al. (2008) contrast different organisational types that allow more or less individual agency based on factors such as culture, organisational conditions and demands and constraints on the individual. This seems a particularly useful approach in relation to this study as it draws attention to the importance of the relationship between organisational conditions and teachers and their behaviours. They focus on discursive practice as the means by which individuals negotiate and re-negotiate their identity in relation to external factors. This is placed almost as an input into their model (**figure Three**) with the output being the agency of the individual to act in ways that reflect their own values, interests and motivation.

Organisations identified as having weak social suggestion (WSS) allow the individual scope to make occupational choices related to their role, in comparison (SSS) organisations employ strong social suggestion and are likely to limit individual agency as teachers are encouraged to 'take on a prescribed role. This process entails suppressing an individual's 'personal voice in favour of an objective and distanced voice' (Cooper and Olson 1996 p.87). In relation to this study, the relationship between individual teachers and the organisation, and their ability to act as agents in enacting their identities as teachers within the organisational culture of the institution will provide an important insight into the main research question.

Figure Three



Giddens theory of structuration (1984) provides us with a useful way of further developing the concept of teachers as agents and the structures within which they operate. He identifies agents being contingent within organisations and that acting as an agent implies an ability to 'intervene in the world', to 'act otherwise', to 'make a difference', to exercise 'some sort of power' (p. 14). He suggests agents have certain defining features that enable them to do this. In particular, being knowledgeable and reflexive in monitoring themselves and social contexts, this reflects the facets of Ti put forward by Gee (2001) in section 2.2, in particular the ability of agents to act intentionally in ways 'which they know or believe will have a particular quality or outcome. They use the knowledge of the act (competence) to achieve a specific quality or outcome' (Pantic 2015, p.762).

For Giddens, 'Structure' refers to the rules and resources implicated in the (re-)production of social systems. He argues that these structures are open to change over time, either

individually or collectively by agents and this is influenced by the strategies individuals or groups adopt in order to maintain or alter current conditions. This picks up on an aspect of Barker's definition outlined in chapter one, regarding the influence patterned arrangements of social structure have on opportunities or choices available. The scope of agents to adopt different strategies is according to Giddens defined by their level of power and autonomy within given structures. He discusses the duality between agency and structure as elements which impact on the formation of notions of the term professionalism. He emphasises that agents and structures are not two independent sets of phenomena, a dualism, as referred to by Gleeson and Knights, but are in fact a 'duality' (p25). This duality symbolises agency and structure as two sides of the same coin, He refers to it as a 'reciprocal relationship where neither structure nor agency can exist independently' (1984, p. 25).

The ability of agents to change organisational structures over time through the action of individual and collective actors is clearly important as an aspect of balance between the organisation and those within it.

This according to Pantic is a reflection of the:

power actors are able to mobilise within social structures, which presume relations of autonomy and interdependence between agents, and which are elaborated in social interaction' (2015, p.763)

Pantic argues that this occurs in many contexts of social life, as actors engage in processes of selective 'information filtering' to regulate the overall conditions of system reproduction either to keep things as they are or to change them (2015, p.763).

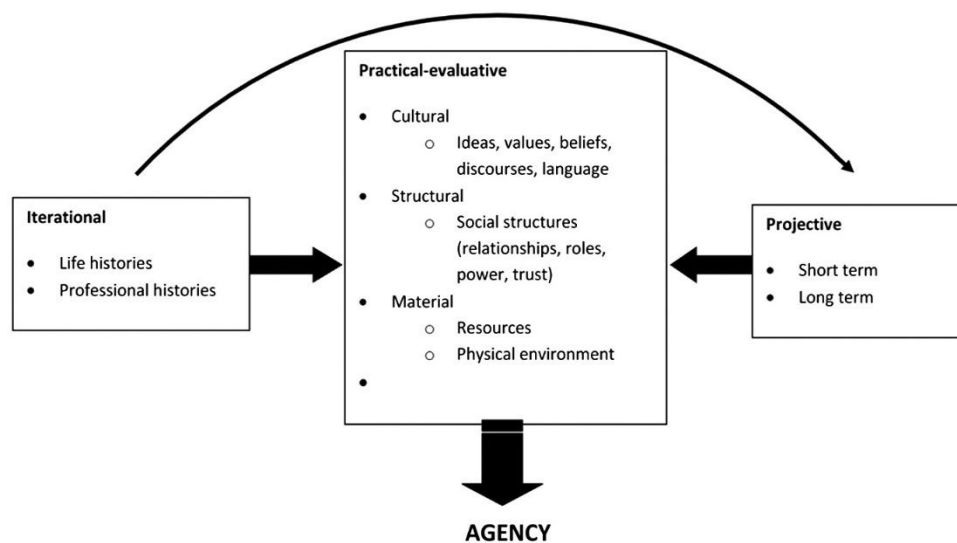
2.6.3 Beyond Agency and social structure

Priestly, Biesta and Robinson (2015) take the notions outlined and develop them further through the concept of ecological agency. This approach was developed from the work of Embrayer and Mische (1998) and puts agency at the centre of this study by providing us with a conceptual view of the term, which draws together all the elements outlined so far in this section. It also enables us to define the interaction between agency and the other key concepts in this study; (namely Ti, professionalism and the marketization of FE). They refer to ecological agency encompassing the influence of contexts and biography on the individual and their decision-making process. They define ecological agency as:

an emergent phenomenon, something that occurs or is achieved within continually shifting contexts over time and with orientations towards past, future and present, which differ within each and every instance of agency achieved (2015, p. 27).

These defining features take the concept of agency beyond the relationship between the individual and social structure developed by Giddens and Barker to develop a more holistic understanding of the individual teacher and the development of their identity. They incorporate the five defining features of Ti outlined earlier in this chapter, in particular the notion that Ti as a continuous process of becoming, influenced by experience, present relationships, and future trajectories.

Figure Four An Ecological Model of Agency



(Teacher Agency An Ecological Approach Priestly, M., Biesta, G. and Robinson, S 2015)

Importantly, the model identifies the influence of biography on the development of the individual's personal capacity (skills, knowledge and values) (Biesta and Tedder 2007) in relation to the cultural, structural and material influences within what they term the practical evaluative domain, which effect teacher agency by influencing personal judgements within different situations. They argue that the outcome of the individual's evaluation of these different influences set against their own personal capacity will determine the strategy they adopt in any given situation (as outlined by Gleeson and James 2007; Orr 2012 and Trent 2014). The strategy adopted by the teacher is likely to impact their Ti, with factors such as commitment and motivation (Beijaard et al. 2004) being enhanced or negatively affected by the adoption of strategies that are either linked to the individual's beliefs and values or go counter to them. These insights provide a context within which we can look at how individual teachers enact their sense of the teaching role within different decision making contexts. It allows us to further develop the concept of Ti to encompass

teacher agency within an organisational setting, which as highlighted in the previous section is influenced by a variety of external market and political factors.

The examples of Florence and Ruth from the transforming learning cultures study (Colley et al. 2007) serve to illuminate these distinctions. The different teacher responses reflect the influence of the practical evaluative domain on their personal capacity and their different evaluations, which led to varying agentic behaviour linked to the meso level influences outlined.

‘Florence’ an experienced modern foreign languages teacher found that a contractual dispute at college where she remained on the ‘silver book’ contract (discussed in chapter one), while many of her colleagues changed contract led to some ‘bad blood’ within the college. During the same period, major changes at the college led to a ‘marginalization of her pedagogical practice’ (2007, p.183), which in combination with the contractual issues left Florence feeling marginalised and isolated, eventually leading to her leaving the sector. Florence discussed no longer being able to continue the relationship with her students that met her professional standards and commitments.

In comparison, Ruth an English teacher used involvement in the TLC project as an opportunity for critical self-reflection and re-evaluating her relationship with students and colleagues. This followed Ruth experiencing a period of stress within the role and feeling

she would leave the profession. The process of critical reflection allowed Ruth to separate out her role as a teacher within the classroom, from the wider college environment. Colley et al point to Ruth discovering 'her own kind of 'distance' —not from her students, but from the micro- (and to some extent, macro) politics of the college, so that these things actually defined her less than they once did' (2007, p.183). They refer to the fluidity and flexibility of Ti within FE and these cases are useful in allowing us to consider these variations and the importance of an individual's beliefs, values and skills and knowledge in enacting their identity as a teacher.

Ruth's ability to focus on her professional practice and limiting the impact of organisational politics shows the individual's ability to evaluate the practical evaluative domain in a way which enhanced personal capacity and agency. The way individual teachers' evaluate different situations within an FE context will provide a valuable insight into the effect of marketization, and will be an important area of focus within the findings of this study.

2.6.4 The impact of social structure for the agency of teacher managers

As outlined in chapter one, this study intends to use a purposive sample of both teachers and teacher managers. In an FE context, managers at a variety of levels still undertake regular teaching roles in combination with management duties (Briggs 2004). This provides a different dimension to the struggle outlined between structure and agency for teachers. In particular, managers have an expectation associated with their role of acting as corporate agents (Briggs 2004), and as such are required to 'see the 'big picture', to understand the

mechanical dimension, and to respond to, and sometimes create, management systems' (2003, p.428). Briggs draws into focus the dynamic of this tension, which as well as having the mechanistic aspect of acting as a corporate agent also involves the manager in a more organic relationship with staff in order to achieve corporate goals. This dialectic pressure is resolved by managers using a variety of strategies, which are effectively captured by Blake and Mouton using a managerial grid (Covey and Ewell 2015, p.59).

They identify five different points on the grid, which represent different management strategies. These vary between managers who are focused on organisational tasks and see staff as an organisational resource for the completion of tasks to managers who are very people focused and concerned with staff well-being at the expense of corporate goals. The model considers the most effective strategy as one which values both people and corporate tasks, seeing that motivating staff is essential to the completion of organisational tasks (Blake and Mouton 1981). Clearly as with teachers, there is a dynamic and tension for managers in accommodating their role as corporate agents, with their own values and beliefs associated with being a manager and in relation to education. This may be more or less difficult for the individual, based on the culture of the organisation and the strength of their own beliefs and motivations. The more senior the formal organisational position, the more likely the individual will have greater autonomy in enacting their own identity (Briggs 2003). However, for first tier managers, these pressures are quite distinct and potentially more complex.

Page (2011) discusses the potential of first tier managers (FTMs) in FE experiencing trialectic as opposed to the dialectic pressures of middle managers. For Page, these trialectic pressures apply more specifically to FTMs because of their position within the organisation. The pressures are outlined within **(figure five)**, which identifies the three competing forces at the points of the triangle. These include the organisational influence on the manager to conform and act as 'corporate agents' working towards college targets. Page refers to many FTMs in the study having very widely defined job descriptions, with in one case 46 separate areas of responsibility. In addition, FTMs in the study referred to being used as 'dog's bodies' to complete almost any task required by the organisation. Responsibility for staff and students are the other two pressures, outlined by Page, faced by first tier managers and Page points to the conflict between the three elements of the trialectic and the FTMs' time.

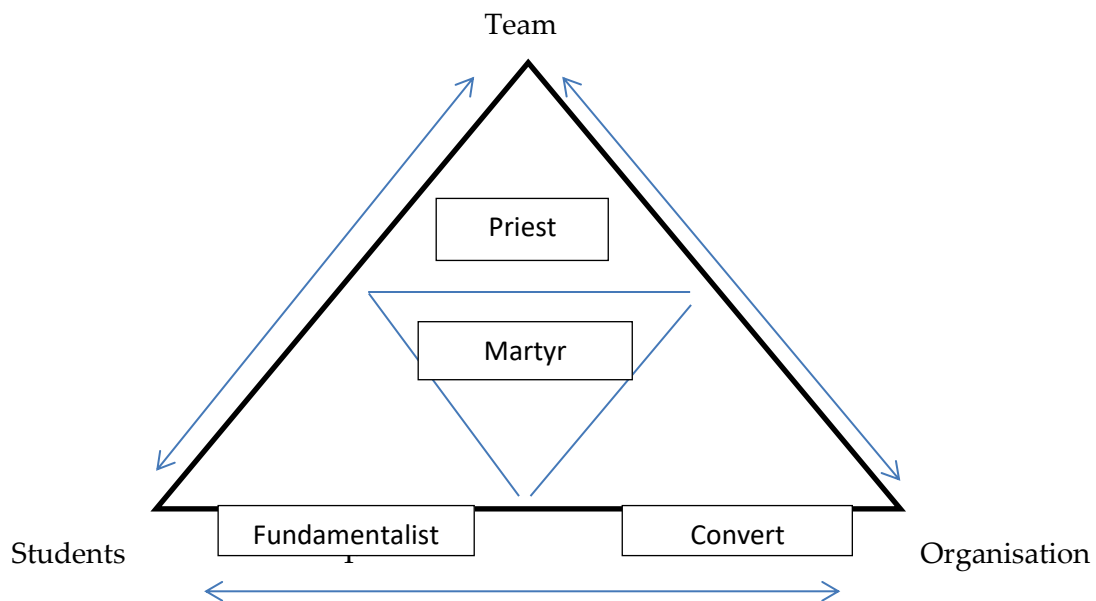
Rather than operating with a unified focus, FTMs were dragged between the competing and concomitant demands of the triumvirate, which precipitated the reactive management style they were forced to adopt. From this perspective, firefighting was not a product of a lack of planning efficacy, but a direct outcome of the trialectic (2011 p.111)

Page, points to the data being clear that each participant prioritised one or more elements of the trialectic, and that this was 'hugely influential in how they perceived their role and how they performed their work' (p.111). He refers to four positions within the triangle represented by religious metaphors which the individual can adopt in trying to resolve this role conflict. Each of these positions can be seen as a strategy adopted by the individual to cope with the external pressures within the role.

For 'fundamentalists', the key responsibility is for students and their militancy is educational 'a response to the demands of financial imperatives and business focus; the identity being eroded is that of professional and teacher' (Page 2011, p.113). In comparison, the strategy adopted by priests sees the team as their primary focus. Page describes 'priests' still being dedicated to the moral purpose of further education, but they consider the best way to maximise student welfare and success is through effectively managing and motivating staff. This means that priests act as 'intercessors between lecturers and senior managers, translators of often incomprehensible and mysterious senior management decisions'. Within Page's typology the 'convert' is in 'institutional transition' they are the FTMs who most readily identify themselves as managers, and prioritise managerial tasks over teaching and learning activities.

The final categorisation 'martyrs' is placed in the middle of the triangle equally exposed to each of the trialectic pressures. Managers adopting this position have the greatest amount of elasticity, and Page describes them as being 'dragged between foci, reactively addressing what is the current imperative' (p117). The model usefully develops an insight into the tension first line managers' face in developing and shaping their identities within an environment of potentially conflicting trialectic pressures. It also exposes the effects of marketization on FTMs, mediating between a neo-liberal output focused managerialist ideology and the values and beliefs of teachers.

Figure Five - FTM model



(Page, 2011)

2.6.5 Summary

This section has sought to outline and develop the defining features and nature of the relationship between a teacher's agency and the external environment. It has layered a variety of aspects of these relationships to provide an in-depth view of the concept and its centrality to the formation, maintenance and development of an individual's Ti.

The outline and defining features of ecological agency place the concept at the centre of this study as it allows us to review the impact of the marketization of FE on the formation and development of Ti over time. It provides a holistic view of the concept taking into account the influence of past, present and future perspectives, which further helps in understanding the interlinking nature of Ti in relation to the main study question. It builds on the defining

features of Ti outlined in section one and the organisational and governmental influences discussed in the previous section to begin to develop a more holistic conceptualisation of Ti and how it is operationalised within an FE context.

The section also identified the potential of first tier managers to undergo trialectic as opposed dialectic pressures, given the positioning of the role and its relationship with students, teachers and the need to act as corporate agents. This along with the other aspects of agency outlined will be considered within the findings of the study. The next section will look at the development and influences on a teachers professionalism and the strategies they adopt in relation to marketization.

2.7 The re-conceptualisation of the terms professional and professionalism within the FE sector and its impact on Ti

2.7.1 Introduction

This section will begin by briefly discussing the two competing views of occupational and organisational professionalism, before outlining the political desire for 'state transformation' (Clarke and Newman 1997, p. 60-61), which provides the context for us to consider the development of professionalism within FE. The section will then outline the move towards organisational professionalism based on the development of a market discourse and NPM within FE. The potential strategies adopted by teachers in response to these changes will be discussed along with the impact of these on the trajectory of an individual's Ti.

2.7.2 Competing views and defining elements of professionalism

Becker (1970) describes the term profession as a collective symbol that consists of a set of ideas, or inter-related characteristics about which there is specific agreement. Robson et al. (2004) point out that it doesn't in fact relate to any specific occupation, 'rather it provides a way of thinking about occupations' (p.184). Hoyle (1974) refers to professionalism as 'those strategies and rhetoric employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status salary and conditions' (p.135). This leads us to consider that the term profession is 'socially constructed, dynamic and contested' (McCulloch et al. 2000, p.6) and involves the positioning of individuals in various ways which may well impact on their individual identity (Robson et al. 2004).

Early studies on professionalism, made a distinction between task-oriented and functional professionalism and these developed further to take into account humanistic elements. More recently, these conceptualisations can be seen to relate to two distinctly different models of the term professionalism and how they have been informed and developed by different internal and external factors. Evetts (2005) refers to occupational professionalism, which focuses on occupational values, the identity of the practitioner and emotional aspects of professionalism. This model of professionalism aims to engender both competence and trust with limited external controls (Cribb 2005). In comparison, organisational professionalism is opposed to the ideals of occupational professionalism, and seeks to act as a managerial control, promising autonomy through accountability and promoting occupational change and the intervention of micro-level control over professional practice (Fournier 1999).

Occupational professionalism was prevalent across the public sector prior to the 1960s (Green 2013), however the government became increasingly interested in reforming and re-engineering public service provision. Green argues that these changes were based on the 'symbolic relationship that holds between neo-liberalism and managerialism' and how these have been 'instrumental in shaping new meanings of professionalism and accountability' (2013, p.40). Morley and Rasool (1999), discuss education becoming more accountable during the 1970s culminating in Callaghan's Ruskin speech of 1976 urging a great debate about how education should be better harnessed. It 'ushered in a new sociological, cultural and economic climate for educational change' (Green 2013, p.43) with the drive for more accountability ultimately leading to the 1988 Education Reform Act and latterly the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act. These served to reduce the 'discretionary areas of professional practice within educational institutions, whilst strengthening market and managerial controls (Esland 1999 in Green 2013, p.44)

2.7.3 The potential impact of post reform changes on professionalism within FE

Gunter refers to professions and professionalism being under pressure due to marketization. Central to this struggle is a shift to accountabilities in support of a neo-liberal 'form of teacher professionalism that fits in with and facilitates an organisational market orientation' (2001, p.142). Shain & Gleeson (1999) suggest that FE has seen a process of re-professionalisation, which has led to re-regulation, work intensification and a discourse of managerialism. Du Gay (1996) calls this controlled de-control: and indeed it leading to a new kind of state, which replaces values with value according to Bernstein (1996) as 'contract replaces covenant' (p.196). This has led to a potential conflict within colleges between

structures developed by organisations in response to the reform agenda and Ti (Gleeson et al. 2005). Avis suggests this has resulted in a 'truncated model of trust' (2003, p.315), which Du Gay argues is a way for the government to re-exert control by the imposition of competence based standards administered by external authorities. This implies a focus on recipients rather than on providers and in privileging their needs and interests and helps reinforce the shift in power from professionals to central government (Leitch 2006 and Esland 1996).

Several writers have focused on how the term professionalism is used to distinguish pre-and post-reform notions of the term with Coffield et al. (2005) referring to college staff no longer occupying the position of trusted public servants and now being regarded as licensed deliverers of nationally produced materials, targets and provision. He discusses trying to draw together into an organigram of the sector and the number and variety of almost constant policy changes, which looked 'more like the internal wiring of an advanced computer than the outline of a 'streamlined', coherent sector' (Coffield et al. 2007, p.15-17). For many the desire to 'micro manage' the FE sector is born out of both a lack of understanding about what FE is (Orr 2009) and how to achieve change within the sector. Hodgson and Spours discuss staff morale in colleges remaining fragile, in part due to poor conditions of service compared to schools and universities, but also due to concerns about 'professional status, together with notable instances of poor management style' (2015, p.4) that they feel has tarnished the reputation of the sector. This has led to a struggle within the education sector over who decides what is valued, what counts as good or effective performance and who considers these measures to be valid. These struggles are highly

individualised by teachers, as they find their values challenged in terms of 'what counts as being a good lecturer in F.E.' (Shain and Gleeson 1999, p.445).

There have also been changes to the way teachers perceive their roles and relationships with students, such as increased paperwork, having to deal with a more diverse and challenging client groups and changes in the very language and discourse within the sector (Edward et al. 2007). These include the transition from teachers and learning to tutors (Jephcote and Salisbury 2007) and from knowledge to skills and responsibility to accountability (Gunter 2001).

Ranson (2003), points to this shift being achieved through new forms of public management based on quasi-market principles. These include:

- The separation of the purchaser role from the provider role
- The growth of contractual or semi-contractual arrangements
- Flexibility of pay and conditions

The changes have moved the focus away from individual teachers reflecting on their own roles and development, to a more linear focus on the market and the satisfaction of student needs and wants. This suggests the focus of the reform changes has not been on structures, but upon 'the re-forming of relationships and subjectivities and the forms of new or re-invented discipline to which this gives rise (Ball 2003, p.217). Ball argues this subtly changes 'what it means to teach and what it means to be a teacher' (p.218). Further to this, Hoyle and Wallace (2007) argue that the reforms may not only be seen as ways of improving public

service, but also as mechanisms to impose new forms of professional development (p.19), as such are not necessarily a new professionalism which is enacted by practitioners.

2.7.4 Potential strategies adopted by teachers

Shain & Gleeson (1999) point to teachers in further education engaging in a variety of responses, which include resistance and strategic or subversive compliance to redeem the relationship between the teacher and student based on educational as opposed to managerial values. Gleeson and Knights (2006), point to teachers mediating managerialism as they seek to re-construct and debate current notions of professionalism. They argue that public professionals are 'neither simply de-professionalized 'victims', who feel oppressed by the structures of control, nor strategic operators seeking to contest the spaces and contradictions of market and audit cultures'(p.279). They feel that both of these extremes may apply in some circumstances but that professional practices in the public sphere are mediated or co-produced outcomes of structure and agency. Further to this Gleeson and James (2007) refer to the creativity of teachers' responses to marketization and Trent (2014) discusses teachers using innovation as a strategy to position themselves in both personal and organisational contexts.

These insights highlight the variety of teacher responses to marketization, influenced by organisational culture in allowing individuals the freedom to develop their identities and autonomy. More recently, Orr (2012) calls into question the use of the term strategic compliance, finding in his own study that participants acted within short time frames often

in response to immediate demand, which he felt could not be 'considered as strategic as it has no ultimate goal. Perhaps 'tactical compliance' is a more useful term in this instance (2012, p.19).

Further to this, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) use the term 'professional capital' to outline how individuals develop and enact their professionalism within different contexts. The term resonates with several of the defining features of Ti outlined at the start of this chapter and the model of ecological agency (figure four) discussed in the previous section. It focuses on the importance of career stages, individual decision making (decision capital) and social situations including the ability to work collaboratively (social capital) on the development of professional capital. The notion of professional capital is seen as useful in relation to this study as it points to the importance of the development of not just the skills and expertise of the individual teacher, but how an individual's professional judgement and the ability to evaluate different situations is honed over time and by the social interactions they have with work colleagues, which adds value to the individual's professional capital.

2.7.5 Professional spaces/fields within organisations

The strategies outlined by Gleeson and Knights, Gleeson and James (2007), Orr (2012) and Trent (2014) go beyond the strategies suggested by Day et.al and Vähäsantanen et.al earlier in the chapter and point to a more complex and contested relationship between teachers trying to enact their own view of their role, against a managerialist culture seeking to control and limit this professional space. This notion of organisational spaces is discussed by Lucas

and Crowther (2016) in an FE context. They refer to the 'strategic action field' adapted from (Fligstein and McAdam 2012) of incorporation, where the dominant managerial discourse has meant FE colleges no longer focus on teaching as a central purpose. Teaching and learning as part of an education process has been reduced to a set of quantifiable outcomes. The strategic action field of incorporation controls what is focused on and valued within colleges, they argue that in the case of FE this was the 'creation of markets, or quasi-markets' (2016, p.584). They point to other areas such as professionalism becoming unorganised professional spaces, as there was:

no strategic interest sufficiently developed to manifest a shared understanding in a policy field. In other words, while the strategic action field (Incorporation) shapes some areas or fields it has very little influence or interest in others (2016, p.584)

This separation between the discourse of the market and professionalism is reflective of a separation between the classroom and the wider organisational environment. While it can be argued that this makes it very difficult for teachers to develop their professional practice, the example of Ruth outlined by Colley et al. points to teachers limiting the impact of the wider organisational environment on their own professionalism. This provides the opportunity within the unorganised social space of the classroom for teachers to reclaim a focus on teaching and learning.

2.7.6 Summary

This section has provided detail of the variety of different strategies a teacher may adopt in different situations, dependent on both the teacher's ability to act as an agent and the effect of organisational conditions and culture on the individual's evaluative judgement within different decision making contexts. These add further detail to the outline conceptualisation discussed in the previous section, the political context outlined in section 2.5 and the defining features of Ti outlined in the first section of the chapter.

2.8 Chapter Two Summary

This review has aimed to outline key literature and debates linked to the main question for the study. The chapter has developed a number of threads to help reveal the complexity and richness of Ti and how it is operationalised within an FE context. It has been important to the development of the study to identify the links and potential influence of the key concepts and impact of a number of debates within the literature on the roles and identity of teachers. These have included the inter-relationship between government policy and its impact on organisational funding and culture and the effect of these on teacher priorities, expectations and role focus. In particular, the huge increase in quantification of individual performance in FE, with its focus on efficiency and the need to provide externally validated evidence of performance (Ball 2007). These measures represent the worth, quality or value of an individual teacher and as outlined have potentially altered notions of professionalism within the sector. The literature review has sought to layer the concepts and show the inter-linking nature of different aspects of Ti, particularly in relation to individual teacher

decision making. The ecological model of agency usefully draws together both the defining elements of Ti and the interaction between the individual within an organisational environment. This also enables us to consider teacher agency in context in relation to the variety of different conflicting organisational demands outlined.

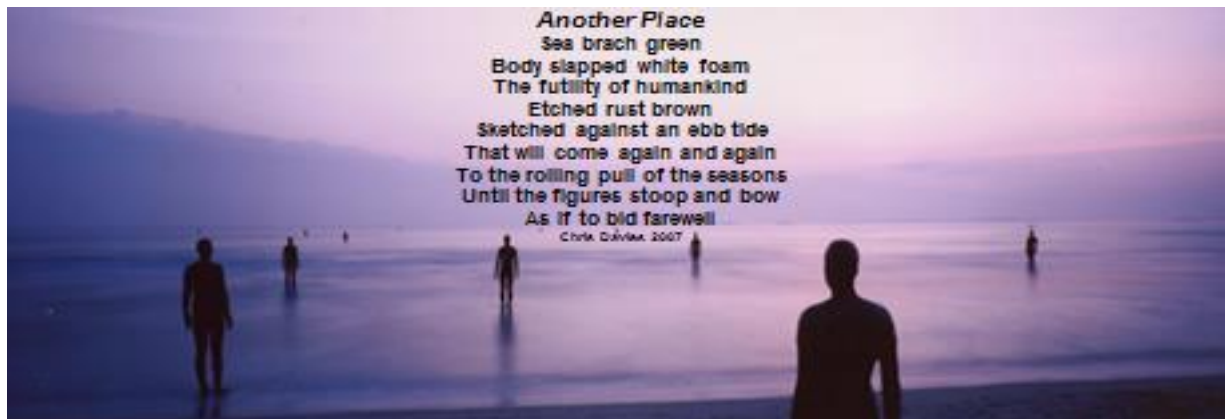
This chapter has provided a detailed overview of Ti in an FE context and examined the key concepts outlined in chapter one, which have been developed throughout the chapter, to provide further detail and focus for the main study. The review has identified a number of potential areas of interest, which have influenced the design of the study (chapter three) and provided areas of focus within the analysis (chapter four). These include the variety and nature of strategies adopted by teachers in response to attempts to position them within their roles and whether or not these lead to more truncated, prescriptive identities, or offer the opportunity for individual transformation and growth. Linked to this, the adoption of strategies which may lead to increases in personal capacity and agency are of particular interest, and how personal capacity is evidenced within an FE context. The study will consider the ability of individuals to be able to adopt different strategies to mediate, moderate and reconstruct notions of professionalism in relation to enacting their own values and beliefs about teaching; In particular, whether these responses are strategic, or as suggested by Orr tactical responses to the external influences outlined and how Ti develops and is maintained within an FE context.

Chapter three will outline in more detail the design of the study and the importance of visual images, narrative and metaphors in capturing the detail of the very individualised struggles of teachers in developing and maintaining their identities.

Chapter Three

Methodology and Methods

3.1 Introduction



As a way into my methodology chapter, I have chosen to illustrate the introduction with a poem based on an Anthony Gormley sculpture called 'Another Place'. It is a useful starting point in outlining the centrality of visual images and the metaphors associated with them, which are two of the key elements we use to ascribe meaning to language (Johnson 2007) and form the basis of the methodology and methods for this study.

I wrote the poem above having listened to a description of the Gormley sculpture and I was fascinated by the explanation he put forward for undertaking the work. Gormley's sculpture speaks of the relationship between humankind and nature, the impact of time and the elements on the figures, which were all based on moulds of his own middle aged frame trying to remain standing against the tides. Time in this instance also relates to planetary motions, which affect the seas and impact the sculptures, which are constructed by human

beings and as such will eventually give way to nature, but are at the same time a reflection of nature as they are eroded and washed away.

The poem is my interpretation of the sculpture, some of the metaphors and meanings associated with each line resonate with Gormley's own comments regarding the work, while others are a re-interpretation based on my own feelings regarding the image. Continuing this theme, the sculpture could be interpreted from an educational perspective; as the participant images in this study with the metaphors and narrative exploring the relationship between teachers, colleges and the state. Whatever the interpretation, it is the power of the visual image and metaphors associated with it that provide us with an insight into human life and in the case of this study act as an instrument for use in analysing the complexity of Ti within an FE context.

Chapter two outlined the importance of narrative and metaphors to this study, which will be further developed in this chapter by examining them in relation to their use as a method of analysing visual images and the inter-linking nature of the concepts in relation to the study. Guyarro and Sanz (2008) refer to the ability of visual images to not only illuminate the linguistic part of the text, but also playing an 'integral role in the constitution of meaning' (p.1602). Similarly, Weber and Mitchell (1996) discuss drawings being a form of text and as such that they can be 'read'. They discuss the rootedness of texts in visual imagery being often neglected in western society, but having the power to communicate effectively through the use of lines and colour. They contend:

drawings offer a different kind of glimpse into human sense making than written or spoken texts do, because they can express that which is not easily put into words: the ineffable, the elusive, the not-yet-thought-through, the sub-conscious.

(p304).

They point to participants in their own work being jolted into recognition of their struggles and stances in relation to the culturally embedded dominant images of the teaching profession. By reflecting and commenting on their images, participants became aware of the influence of past experiences and stereotypes on their own development and views of the world. Visual images can serve to illuminate 'embodied knowledge' that is knowledge which goes beyond the rational intellectual mode of thinking, to include 'emotions, culture, physical sensation and life experiences' (Leitch 2006, p.552). As stated in chapter one, this self-awareness provides the opportunity to be able to set personal life stories within a professional context and provide what Casey (1993) describes as the 'political impetus for on-going action' (p158).

Griffiths utilises an image (**Figure Six**) which helps to extend this discussion in relation to identity formation, using a web to demonstrate the potential connections and inter-relationships in what she terms a 'web of identity' (1995, p.3). The web as a visual image and concept is used to describe something which is complex, 'it is intricate, involved and interlaced, with each part entangled with the rest and dependent on it' (1995, p.2). Griffiths offers some interesting insights into the choice of a web, which are useful as metaphors to look at some of the key notions associated with Ti:

- *the web is nearly invisible till the dew falls on it*
- *The web takes its shape from the surrounding circumstances and the spider herself*
- *Webs can be seen as a whole or as a conglomeration of parts*
- *It suits the purposes of the maker, but the circumstances around the web are not under the spider's control.*
- *We can focus in on particular nodes, or where the lines cross, while still being able to see how the stitches resolve themselves into patterns and pictures by linking with other stitches*

(Griffiths, M. 1995, p. 3)

Figure Six



Further to the ability of visual images to convey complex meaning, I was conscious of the power of the narrative associated with the images in allowing the participants and myself to interpret their meaning. Importantly, Berger (2013) identifies language as a 'system of signs that express ideas' (p.22). He refers to the work of Saussure in developing the idea of the signifier and the signified and their importance in developing meaning within language. Saussure (1974) divided signs into two parts, the signifier and the signified or object, and argued that the relationship between the two is arbitrary and based on convention. Specifically, we interpret each word by ascribing a meaning to it, but the relationships between the words and our interpretation of them is developed individually and can vary in different situations. What is more these conventions can and do change over time. This provides us with a valuable insight into the relationship between language and human meaning making associated with words, images and their interpretation, particularly

through the use of metaphors to express ideas and understandings. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that humans live by metaphors, grounded in subjective experience, emotion and imagination, metaphors 'provide ways of comprehending experience; they give order to our lives ... [and] are necessary for making sense of what goes on around us' (p.185+186).

It was important for me that the study provided opportunities for the participants and myself to interpret and re-interpret the meanings associated with the images and narrative. Therefore, recording the interviews, transcribing them and my interpretation of these exchanges was a valuable part of developing the key themes within the data. Sharing these with the participants as one of the stages of the research process (section 3.4.1) was useful in triangulating the findings (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011) as well as being an important aspect of adding value for both parties. Berger contends that for humans society is itself a primary reality, not just the sum of individual activities, therefore in studying human behaviour we need to consider that meanings and explanations are directly linked to social interactions (2013, p.24). He quotes Durkheim, who argues, 'the reality crucial to the individual is not the physical environment, but the social milieu, a system of rules and norms, of collective representations, which makes possible social behaviour (p.24).

This section has sought to build on the work of chapter one and two and set in context the value of images, narrative and metaphors as methods to investigate the complex relationship between individual teachers, colleges and the state. It has also put forward the

value of these insights, which can be termed 'knowledge' (Miles and Huberman 1994) and will be further developed in the next section.

3.2 Methodological Framework

Chapter one (section 1.4 and 1.5) outlined the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of this study, which are based on a social constructivist view of reality, which I will not repeat here. However it is useful to the development of this chapter to outline some of the defining features of this approach and their limitations, which influenced the study design. The approach adopted for this study assumes that knowledge is socially constructed and that 'Social phenomena exist not only in the mind, but also in the objective world' (Miles and Huberman 1994 p.4). Further to this, Miles and Huberman contend that 'social phenomena, such as language, decisions, conflicts and hierarchies, exist objectively in the world and exert strong influences over human activities because people construe them in common ways. Things that are believed become real and can be inquired into' (1994, p.4). From this stance, the construction of narratives and metaphors are knowledge in that they are the mechanisms we use to understand our lived experiences (Delanty 1997).

Interpretivist research designs do not lead to generalizable theories and do not hold that any set of outcomes from one study would be replicable in another study or different situation (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2013). Interpretivists are more concerned with the individual, explaining human behaviour, which is held to differ from 'inanimate natural phenomena and indeed from each other' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007, p.8). From a positivistic

perspective this implies a potential weakness in interpretivistic analysis, however as Cohen, Manion and Morrison point out, positivism is perhaps less successful when applied to studying human behaviour where

the immense complexity of human nature and the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomena contrast strikingly with the order and regularity of the natural world. This point is nowhere more apparent than in the contexts of classroom and school where the problems of teaching, learning and human interaction present the positivistic researcher with a mammoth challenge (2007, p.11).

3.2.1 Issues of Validity (credibility, dependability and confirmability)

The variations outlined also impact how we assess the success or otherwise of a given study. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest a re-thinking of terms such as validity, reliability and generalisability in qualitative studies as the study design and criteria for success are distinctly different from positivistic research. For example, Lincoln and Guba (1990) discuss the reconceptualising of traditional validity concepts, by using labels which are more acceptable to qualitative researchers. These different labels reflect variations in the study design and what are deemed to be measures of success, with a greater focus on the research being credible and dependable in terms of both participant and researcher accounts and interpretations of accounts. This moves away from a reliance on the replicability of a study (Ritchie and Lewis 2003) with an increased focus on capturing the lived experiences of individual participant's lives (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2013).

The credibility and dependability referred to by Lincoln and Guba from the perspective of this study can be seen as the ability of the account being put forward to represent the participants (Creswell and Miller 2000) and whether the findings are 'really' about what they appear to be about' (Robson 2002, p. 93). Credibility refers to the accuracy of findings and whether there is consistency between the views of the participants and the researcher's representation of them (Coughlan & Cronin 2007). For this study, it can be argued that this begins with adopting a research design which fits the research question (section 3.3) (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011) and continues through to the selection of the participant sample (section 3.5.1) and ensuring the data presented in the findings represents the data analysis (section 3.4) (Miles and Huberman 1994). The confirmability of the research refers to the steps taken by the researcher to demonstrate that findings emerge from the data and not their own predispositions (Anney, 2014). To ensure confirmability, this chapter aims to provide a detailed account of the research process to enable readers to determine whether the data analysis procedures were carried out appropriately (Kalu 2017).

Maxwell (1992) produced a typology for categorising forms of understanding and corresponding types of validity that are more relevant to qualitative research (Norris 1997), which is seen as useful here to further develop this discussion. He discusses the threat to qualitative research from different types of validity: (descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity). These provide a useful guide to ensure the study is undertaken to minimise these threats in both design and implementation. Maxwell discusses descriptive validity being a primary aspect of the other aspects of validity, and that it concerns the factual accuracy of accounts, which need to avoid inaccuracy and incompleteness in

describing the data. As outlined in the study design (section 3.3) the reading and re reading of the transcripts using a four stage process to code and develop the themes in the data will be an important aspect of ensuring my analysis reflects the participant descriptions.

Constantly questioning assumptions and re-visiting the data will aid this process and discussing my interpretation of the interviews with participants as outlined in the pilot study (section 3.3.2) will provide an important confirmation of the process.

Interpretive validity concerns the intentions, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, understandings of the people whose lives are represented in an account (Norris 1997) and Maxwell point to these accounts being 'grounded in the language of the people studied and rely as much as possible on their own words and concepts' (1992, p. 289). Therefore, the researcher needs to avoid imposing a conceptual framework by forcing the data to fit into it. Providing clear narrative accounts from the taped interviews in the findings of the teacher participants working context, journey, and how these relate to the visual images will be an important aspect of ensuring the interpretations in this study fairly represent participant views.

Further to this, Kalu (2017) highlights the need for qualitative researchers to be reflexive, which they describe as a concept of qualitative research rigor, which provides 'direction for researchers to be aware of bias and control by making an explicit quest to limit the researcher's effects on the data through self-awareness' (2017, p.51). Norris (1997) discusses one practical way of looking at validity is through issues of error and bias:

Research whether quantitative or qualitative, experimental or naturalistic, is a human activity subject to the same kinds of failings as other human activities. Researchers are fallible. They make mistakes and get things wrong. There is no paradigm solution to the elimination of error and bias. Different forms of research may be prone to different sources of error, but clearly none are immune. (1997, p.173)

They continue:

Simultaneously research demands scepticism, commitment and detachment. To understand the object or domain of inquiry takes an intense degree of commitment and concentration. To remain open minded, alert to foreclosure and to sources of error needs some measure of detachment. As with other forms of art, research requires detachment from oneself, a willingness to look at the self and the way it influences the quality of data and reports; in particular research demands a capacity to accept and use criticism, and to be self-critical in a constructive manner.

In comparison theoretical validity refers 'to an account's validity as a theory of some phenomenon' (Maxwell 1992, p. 291). Researchers need to consider alternative explanations of the object of study and whether what is described closely matches what is generally known (Norris 1997). It will be important to consider both the findings and the literature in drawing together potential conclusions and developing what they tell us in relation to the main questions set for this study.

I was conscious during this process of my role as an 'insider researcher' (Le Gallais, 2008, p.147) and my knowledge and experience of incorporation as an employee at college B (see section 3.5.2) the college involved in the first merger and latterly the two further mergers. This positioning gave me a particular perspective regarding the detailed changes to staff in each of the institutions, including the various contractual changes (see 3.5.3) and changes in culture and working practices. Le Gallais discusses insider researchers requiring heightened

sensitivity to such routines and boundary mechanisms which may otherwise 'impair their 'clearsightedness' (Schutz 1976) and lead them to perceive what they expect to perceive' (2008, p.147). Further, she cites Morse who discusses insider researchers being aware of their dual roles as 'investigator and employee' (1998, p. 61) and their 'personal involvement in and proximity to the setting which might challenge the validity of the research' (Le Gallais 2008, p.146).

In comparison, Brannick and Coghlan (2007) counter such concerns by stressing the value of the 'rich and complex' knowledge which the insider possesses with regard to the systems of the institution of which s/he is a member (p.60). Smyth and Holian point out, from a constructivist perspective 'we learn and know things through interaction with the world' (2008, p.35). They contend that insider accounts are 'less inclined to present an ordered and sanitised picture of either the phenomenon under study or the research process itself' (2008, p.35). Le Gallais discusses the rich and complex knowledge she obtained as an insider researcher:

being attuned to the nuances of a shared knowledge and collective identity linked to her insider status. My inside knowledge of the research location enabled me to short-cut much of the mutual familiarisation phase usually necessary to seek out common ground and establish a research relationship. I saw my position as a practitioner researcher (2008, p.146)

While not underplaying the comments of Schutz and Morse, I feel my role as an 'insider researcher' was very helpful, by being attuned to the shared knowledge and collective identity Le Gallais discusses. It also enabled me to deal far more easily with the practicalities

of arranging interviews quickly and efficiently at mutually convenient times allowing me to capture the freshness of the meanings associated with the participant images.

The remaining sections within this chapter will aim to provide a detailed account of the research process to help enable the reader to assess 'whether the data analysis procedures were carried out appropriately' (Kalu 2017, p.51) and that the research findings emerge from the data analysis and as highlighted, not my own predispositions (Anney, 2014). While accepting as outlined by Norris I am not immune, from bias and error, but through self-awareness and reflexivity, I will aim to limit these effects on the research process.

3.3 Study Design

This section will outline the design of the study, which has been influenced by the stance of the researcher and the approach towards undertaking the study outlined in the previous section. It will discuss the role of the pilot study in the development of the design and the stages and different activities undertaken as part of the study.

As discussed in section 3.1 visual images, narrative and metaphors are central to this study and form the basis of the methodology and methods used. Along with the key research question for the study, these have framed the approach towards the study design. Further to this, given the importance outlined of allowing respondents the opportunity to fully engage in and benefit from being involved in the study, it was important that the study involved a

flexible design that placed participant contributions at the centre of the frame allowing them to fully engage in the research process (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007).

Zeichner (1995) points to the separation between academic research and teacher research, highlighting in many cases the one sided nature of the relationship between the academics undertaking the research and the teacher participants involved. He discusses 'the pattern of 'hit and run' educational research which merely uses teachers as objects of study' and the 'growing reluctance on the part of school staff to tolerate a passive role for themselves in academic educational research and less patience with a situation where most of the rewards go to the academic researchers' (p.156). As previously highlighted, I was very concerned with ensuring that being part of the study provided participants with the opportunity for self-reflection and development and that the relationship between the researcher and participant was symbiotic in nature.

Given this background I decided to use semi structured in-depth interviews (usually between 45 minutes and an hour in length) with each of the twelve participants, focused on discussing the visual activities undertaken (outlined below) as the main research method. The interviews discussed two visual images completed by participants prior to the interviews and following an initial meeting with the interviewer.

Participants were asked to develop some visual images based on two key themes:

- 1) An image or representation which forms a narrative based on the individual's teaching journey up to the present time (Day et.al 2006 and MacLure 2003). They could complete this as a set of images or as a single image which encompassed several aspects of their journey.
- 2) The second image they were asked to complete focused on their view of themselves as a teacher, based on the work of Johnson (2007) and Garner (1997) this looked at what they considered to be the key aspects of their Ti.

They were encouraged to think of the primary subject being their role as a teacher, with further focus being given to the situation or circumstances within which the teacher is engaged. This provided an opportunity for them to engage in a dialogue about their image, which often revealed more complex metaphors linked to their role (Johnson 2001).

A variety of prompt questions were used based on the work of Day et.al (2006) and Johnson (2001) to try and develop the ideas and metaphors within the drawings in relation to the main question, areas of interest and key research themes (**Appendix Two**). Further to the research questions, a variety of probing questions were used (see also appendix two) to further develop detail and depth (Miles and Huberman 1994). Each of the interviews was recorded using a digital recorder and saved as a WAV (waveform audio file). This was helpful not only in transcribing the interview, but also in returning to specific points easily

by using the exact time particular events occurred. The narrative from each interview formed the basis of the data analysis (section 3.4) linked to the visual activities.

The research design aimed to provide a consistent approach to both the visual activities and the main research question, with flexibility in terms of the more probing exchanges based on areas of interest both for the participant and the researcher. Robson and McCartan (2016) discuss semi structured interviews providing flexibility for the researcher in the shaping of the interview, while ensuring there is a structure to provide coherence and consistency between participants. This includes the structure being sufficiently flexible to:

permit topics to be covered in the order most suited to the interviewee, to allow responses to be fully probed and explored and to allow the researcher to be responsive to relevant issues raised spontaneously by the interviewee (2016, p.291)

They also highlight in-depth interviews being interactive and the interviewer using a 'range of probes and other techniques to achieve depth of answer in terms of penetration, exploration and explanation. An initial response is often at a fairly 'surface' level: the interviewer will use follow-up questions to obtain a deeper and fuller understanding of the participant's meaning' (2016, p.290). They argue the approach allows the researcher to explore all the factors that underpin the answers participants give, including individual feelings, reasoning, opinions and beliefs, and that this furnishes the explanatory evidence that is an important element of qualitative research (2016, p.290). This approach was utilised within the interviews for this study and provided a flexible way of exploring the meaning

behind the metaphors associated with each image. Using the images as a point of focus to develop the various exchanges proved useful in structuring and developing the interviews.

Examples of this flexibility can be seen in the pilot study findings (section 3.3.2), which provided useful insights in helping further develop the study design and further outlining areas of interest for the main study. The choice and construction of the images allowed participants to emphasise particular experiences, events and individuals that had influenced their journey, and as such provided a reflexive approach to the interview process. Further to the initial interviews, a final meeting was held with each participant (3.3.1) to review the individual codes and categories associated with their images and narrative, and the overall themes within the data.

3.3.1 Stages in the research process

Undertaking the research for the main study involved the following stages, which were agreed with my supervision team and based on the work of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007):

- 1 Agree ethical procedure and approach with the institutions
- 2 initial approach and discussion with potential participants
- 3 Meeting to agree participation, discuss ethical considerations and to outline the visual activities
- 4 First meeting to discuss the image of being a teacher
- 5 Second meeting to discuss the image of the teaching journey
- 6 Final meeting to discuss my interpretation of the data and overall themes developed

Ideally, each interview was scheduled within a week of the completion of the images to ensure that the metaphors, relationships and meanings that were envisaged when completing the task were captured during the interview. The final meetings took place after an initial analysis of the data for each participant and provided the opportunity to discuss the findings and key themes emerging.

3.3.2 Pilot study

The term pilot study often referred to as a 'feasibility study' provides the opportunity for the researcher to run a smaller scale trial prior to undertaking the main study (Polit et.al 2001). Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) discuss the importance of pilot studies in helping to test and refine the research questions, methods and instruments, as well as establishing any issues in the field with operationalising the research design. This sub section will outline the lessons learnt from the pilot and its value in helping to shape the main study.

The pilot was undertaken over a six month period using five participants who encompassed the purposive sampling criteria outlined in (3.5.1). The outcomes were useful in helping to further refine the study design, in particular the approach to developing the interviews, the importance of a reflexive approach to the research questions and the framing of the questions to maximise the participant voice within feedback. The findings helped to confirm the value of the purposive sample criteria, particularly the participant's journey into teaching on the type of teacher they become and the value they ascribed to different aspects of the teaching role. In addition, individual experience levels both inside and outside education and how these affected the way participants responded in similar situations.

The pilot also served to verify the value of the study design in developing rich and detailed feedback concerning a wide variety of influences on an individual's Ti. Notable amongst these were the importance of specific biographical events and the separation between the classroom and wider college environment in the development of an individual's Ti. During the pilot study some of the participants expressed a wish to re-visit their images and narrative as a result of involvement in the study. This reflection proved valuable for the participants in further developing meanings ascribed to particular events and how these were perceived as part of their overall teaching journey.

There was also evidence in the pilot of the complexity surrounding a teacher's evaluation of teaching and learning activities as opposed to performativity routines and the effect of this on their beliefs and values related to these decisions. As outlined in Chapter two the literature suggests that an individual's capacity to enact their Ti is influenced by a variety of personal and organisational factors that encompass the decision making environment and affect the individual's personal capacity within a given situation. There was evidence of individual's strengthening personal capacity by assigning tasks associated with performativity with less focus, which reduced the impact on their identity as a teacher. This involved a more simplistic cognition process, which had less influence on the individual's values and beliefs as a teacher. This provided an area of interest within the main study.

The pilot study provided a useful validation of the research methods and approach towards undertaking the study. The opportunity for participants to re-visit their images and narrative was built into the research design, which for the final design included a final

meeting with participants to discuss the analysis of the interview and the development of the overall themes as part of the project. This type of triangulation of the data was used to offer 'phenomenological validity' (Blatchford and Blatchford 1997). Giddens (1993) points to the 'double hermeneutic' (two-way relationship) as one of the most important implications of reflexivity for educational researchers and the findings outlined above point to the value for both researcher and participant to re-visit the analysis as part of the pilot study.

All participants discussed enjoying 'setting out' and 'scripting' their professional lives and felt the process helped them to 'see where the pieces fit' and being useful in helping to 'make sense of what has happened within their teaching journey'. It also became clear that some of the richest detail came from these more probing exchanges between the researcher and participant. A consequence for the participant and the researcher of engaging in the reflective process was to ask questions like – what does this mean for me? How might this affect my future practice? Engaging in the pilot study further confirmed the importance and value of allowing the participants to consider these questions as a key aspect of the benefit and value they gain from being involved in the study. As outlined in chapter one, I wanted the design to provide the opportunity for transformative learning, for participants, and evidence of this was seen in the pilot study.

3.3.3 The interviews in the main study

Following on from experience developed in the pilot study, participants were interviewed twice as outlined in (3.3.1) with a third meeting being held to discuss the analysis of the

transcriptions. Participants were given a blank canvas in terms of the design and structure of the visual representations linked to the two tasks outlined in (3.3) with the drawings being used as a focal point for the interviews. Using the visual images in this way proved very effective in shaping and structuring the meetings, putting participants at ease and allowing them to discuss the metaphors and meaning ascribed to the images, without the imposition of a rigid set of questions. This approach was extremely revealing and allowed the participant voice to be central to the interview process (Weber and Mitchell 1996). The questions were utilised as a guide, in some cases several areas of interest were covered automatically as part of the discussion of the image, but where necessary they were used to prompt participants if certain areas of interest to the study had not been discussed.

The interviews were organised as soon as possible, given individual commitments, after the images had been completed to try and capture the richness of the metaphors and meaning behind the design and structure (Johnson 2001). In the interview I was seeing the images for the first time and this for me also added to their power in providing a focus for the exchanges. The immediacy of the discussions, while knowing that each interview was being recorded enabled me to be fully involved in the exchanges without worrying about transcribing what was said. I could then take down phrases or words I might want to pursue further, and again these were usually discussed using the image as a frame of reference, as a means of joint meaning making linked to the teacher's identity and journey into teaching. The process was useful in allowing participants to reconcile 'what is known with what is hidden' (Johnson 2007, p.179) revealing the complex nature of the relationship between the individual and the organisation.

3.4 Sample colleges and participants

As discussed, this study used a purposive approach towards sampling participants. Astin and Long discuss a person being included or not included in a purposive sample dependent on 'whether or not the person meets the specific eligibility criteria' (2009, p.393). They point to researchers undertaking qualitative research ensuring that the sample is:

informative and diverse in terms of the range of perspectives that are generated and purposefully choosing who to talk to, what situation or events to observe and which will be most informative to the study question (Astin and Long 2009, p.393).

As outlined in section 3.5.1 and figure seven the literature review and key aims for this study clearly outline the range of perspectives and criteria that have informed and generated the research sample.

Other sampling strategies were considered and dismissed based on their lack of suitability in terms of the aims of the study and study design. In particular, Ritchie and Lewis discuss probability sampling being inappropriate for use in qualitative research (2003, p.80) as the research is not aiming to estimate the incidence of phenomena in the wider population. This points to qualitative sampling requiring a different logic to quantitative enquiry, one in which neither statistical representation nor scale are key considerations and can in fact work against the requirements for qualitative sampling. For qualitative researchers, the ability of the sample to represent the salient characteristics outlined in the key aims of the study, knowledge and theories within the subject field and any gaps in knowledge are key aspects of the sampling strategy (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Further to this a convenience or

(availability) sampling strategy, where participants are selected based on their availability (Saunders and Thornhill 2012) was rejected on the basis of having clearly identified criteria for developing the sample, which were enacted by the writer as an 'insider researcher' (Edwards 1999), having useful access to participants meeting the sample criteria from all colleges within the study.

3.4.1 The participants

The purposive sample adopted for the study was based on the defining elements of Ti outlined in chapter two, in particular the work of Gee (2001), Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), Sfard and Prusak (2005), Day et.al (2006), Beijaard (1995), MacLure 2003, Lave and Wenger (1991) and Page (2011). These studies influenced the development of the sample and study design by highlighting the significance of different individual characteristics to the formation and development of Ti. In particular, the work of Gee, Day et.al and MacLure, point to the significance of individual development and differences in the way we perceive the world. For Gee this stemmed from our individual natures, while for Day and MacLure, it was a reflection of experience and personal biographies, which influenced individual development. These include the influence of teacher career stages, institutional roles, subject specialisms and the balance between professional and personal biographies. The work of Gee and Sfard and Prusak were useful in demonstrating the influence of affinity groups, culture and different discourses in the development of Ti. Sfard and Prusak discuss 'how collective discourses shape personal worlds and how individual voices combine into the voice of a community'. While for Gee and Lave and Wenger affinity groups can show the

influence of previous vocational experience on individual attitudes and beliefs in relation to their vocational subject and teaching role. Based on the literature reviewed for this study and the key authors outlined, the following sample criteria (**Figure Seven**) were used for the development of the participant sample.

Figure Seven

Sample criteria	Further detail
Levels of Teaching Experience	Beginning teachers – Mid career – Late career
Levels of vocational experience	Significance on view of being a teacher
Subject Taught and Background	Vocational – Academic
Organisational Role	Teacher - FTM – Middle Manager – Senior Manager

3.4.2 The colleges

The four colleges used in the study were part of an ongoing merger process over a six year period. Although the colleges varied considerably in terms of size, structure, institution type and location, I do not claim that they provide a nationally representative sample. However, in the context of the study, access to a wide and varied pool of approximately one thousand teaching staff enabled the selection of a group of participants that reflected the sample criteria.

All of the mergers involved the dissolution of the corporation of the smaller partner (in what is termed a type B merger), with the staff, assets and liabilities transferring into it a single dissolution (AoC 2016). College B, C and D were all subsumed into the corporation of

College A. College A and B were the first to merge in 2003, but college B continued to operate completely autonomously until after the final merger in 2009. Following the initial merger, there were two further mergers, with college C in 2006 and College D in 2009. After this final merger a period of combining the institutions in terms of culture and the sharing of staff between the campuses took place between 2011 and 2012. This coincided with some of the final respondent interviews for this study which were undertaken in the summer term of 2011. This was seen as useful in relation to the study as it adds a further aspect to reviewing the effect of strong meso level cultural change on an individual's Ti.

College A was the largest institution prior to merger with a turnover of £45m. The college had a long history dating back to 1900 and was well known for its GCSE and 'A' level provision, and at the time of the study was the largest provider of these programmes in the U.K. The college had enjoyed a long period of success and financial security with an established principal and high success rates and low post incorporation staff turnover.

College B and college D in comparison both had long technical and vocational histories with college B having over half of its provision within construction industries. Both institutions had experienced financial difficulties and poor Ofsted inspections shortly after incorporation, which had resulted in the appointment of new principals in combination with staff contractual disputes, a large number of redundancies and new management teams. College D the final college to be merged was the second largest at the time of merger with a turnover of £30m, while College B was the smallest of the FE colleges with a turnover of £7m

similar to college C the sixth form college within the study. College C was a traditional sixth form college focusing on 'A' level provision and a good range of business and health vocational courses. The college also had an established principal, who became the Deputy Principal of the combined institution (A, B & C) after their merger in 2006.

The principal of college A, who became the Principal of the combined college (A, B & C) decided to retire in 2008 and the principal of college D Bradbury was appointed initially as principal of the combined college. However, a decision was made by the board of governors at college D to not appoint a new principal and soon the institutions were in negotiations to merge with Bradbury being appointed principal of the overall college in 2009.

Further to the changes outlined, two years after the final merger, the senior management team of the combined college had become largely populated by managers from college D where Bradbury had originally been principal, despite the college being far smaller in turnover and student numbers than the combined college (A, B & C). These changes occurred towards the end of this study and provide a useful background to the changing culture of the combined institution and some of the later interviews, which will be highlighted, linked to each participant.

Further to the discussion outlined in section 3.5.1 and 3.5.2, the table below (**Figure Eight**) provides an overview of the participants and the institution mix within the main study. It captures the detail of the purposive sample in relation to the sample criteria outlined.

Figure Eight

Name / Institution	Category / Categories	Comments
Dave – College A	Later career & Academic Science	35+ years as a teacher – member of a large science team
Stan – College B	Mid- Career & Academic Law	20+ years as a teacher – second career - member of a large Law and Business team
Sandra – College C	Mid- Career & Academic Teacher Training	10+ years as a teacher – second career
Charmaine – College A	Start of career – trainee teacher & Vocational Health & Social Care	2years teaching - Long vocational background in nursing
Ruth – College B	Mid- career – Vocational Hairdressing	Less than 10 years as a teacher
Melanie – College C	Start of career – trainee teacher & Vocational Access to HE	3 years part-time teaching - Previous Access student – Very varied vocational experience
Doug – College D	Senior Manager – Assistant Principal – vocational professional	20+ years in teaching - Manages a large directorate – Still teaches each week
Brian – College A	Middle Manager – Head of School – Vocational Professional	25 + years in teaching - Manages a Large curriculum area - Still teaches each week
Liz – College A	First Line Manager – Programme Manager – Academic Teacher Training	15 years teaching - Manages Teacher Training – still teaches 400 hrs
Florence-College B	Middle Manager- recently promoted from FLM – Academic	15+years teaching – second career previously nursing
Harjit – College D	Visiting Teacher –vocational professional	3 years part-time – second career Business experience
Mike – College A	End of career Teacher – Vocational	30+ years teaching (20 years in Secondary 5 as a Head Teacher)

3.4.3 Different employment terms

It is also considered worth noting that during the period leading up to and during the study the newly combined college underwent a number of contractual disputes and changes that are of relevance to the research in that they significantly impacted teaching staff from the

different colleges in different ways. Three of the four institutions (B, C & D) adopted a new government backed contract post incorporation, which significantly reduced holiday entitlement for teachers (approximately 20 days per year) and increased annualised teaching hours (72 hours per year) with no remission model in place for additional teaching duties. However, college A introduced a more favourable contract with staff having ten days more entitlement than the other unmerged colleges in the study and a significantly reduced teaching load. In addition, college A had given staff an annual salary increase each year since incorporation, which meant there was a significant difference in the salary scales of the different institutions.

Following the mergers with college B and C, staff from the two merged colleges, were given the option to move onto the more favourable conditions, but this proved more difficult following the final merger given that College D had significantly inferior pay and holiday conditions. Bradbury decided to try to get all staff to sign a new contract, which for staff from the merged college (A,B & C) meant a reduced holiday entitlement, and for all staff meant having to sign up to a new college charter with a set of standards of behaviour and responsibilities as a 'professional lecturer'. Soon after agreeing the new contract the combined college began a round of redundancies, which again caused significant insecurity, particularly for staff who had been employed at college A given the background outlined. During the introduction for each participant image in chapter four, any further detail regarding specific structural changes for a participant's particular area of work will be detailed to provide a micro level focus of the outcomes of the merger process.

3.5 Data Analysis

Analysing the data for this study utilised a four stage process, based on the work of Saldana (2009) and Maxwell and Miller (2008). The process began with an initial set of twenty five codes, (usually words or phrases) which were influenced by the following:

- The research question and areas of interest for the study
- the literature review of the key themes and concepts outlined in chapter two
- The findings of the pilot study
- The experience and positioning of the writer

Saldana (2009) discusses the coding of qualitative data as the arranging of things into a 'systematic order, to make something part of a system or classification to categorize' (p.8).

Codes attempt to capture the essential elements of a study they are evocative and help attribute meaning to language or visual data (Saldana 2013). Further to this, Bernard points to codification as the 'search for patterns in the data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there in the first place (2006, p.452). Saldana cites Charmaz (2006) who puts it metaphorically, 'coding generates the bones of your analysis, integration will assemble those bones into a working skeleton' (2009, p.45).

Twenty five codes were used as the basis for the first review of the data, which adopted a holistic approach to reviewing each interview and transcribing key passages, sentences and phrases (Maxwell and Miller 2008). Considering the data linked to the two different tasks proved useful in the first and second phases. This enabled consideration of the distinction between the individual's journey into teaching and their current view of themselves as a teacher. A second phase of analysis led to some revisions of the initial list, subsuming some

codes and beginning to establish links between the codes as a basis for categorising the data. This involved beginning to generate categories by 'grouping similarly coded data based on shared characteristics (Hedlund-de Witt 2013). Identifying inter-relationships between the data, categories and the participants was a very interesting phase of the study and began to reveal some key insights and findings. In particular, the effects of experience within and outside FE on the individual's professional views, the importance of the individual biographies of participants on their identity as a teacher and the power of the visual images in enabling individuals to develop metaphors associated with the tasks set. The third phase further developed the range of categories and began to establish the key themes within the data. The final phase led to the development of three key themes (section 4.2). The process outlined proved effective in refining the data and developing the key themes.

During the final meeting with each participant to revisit their images, the overall themes emerging from the data were discussed. It was made clear that the themes may not apply equally to each participant, but each of the twelve respondents agreed with at least two of the three themes, different in several cases, but providing a useful validation of the quality of the findings (Gorard & Taylor, 2004).

As discussed, the interpretive stance of the study sees the narrative and metaphors associated with the visual tasks and interviews of each participant as knowledge (Delanty 1997) and key to the data analysis process. Given this, it was important to consider the relationship between the primary subject, (the tasks set) and the secondary subject, (the visual metaphors linked to each task) (Johnson 2001). The metaphors acted as a lens through

which to provide shape and meaning to the primary subject (Johnson 2007) and helped define the research categories and develop the research themes by ascribing context and meaning to the participant narratives (Saldana 2013). The metaphors served to anchor participant thoughts and feelings in relation to experiences within a given context, by establishing relationships and meanings and positioning characters (Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

Within the study, metaphors were often formed by, or linked to key phrases or statements, which served to provide an insight into the individuals' meaning making, within the narrative, helping to understand the relationship between the teacher and the effects of the variety of influences outlined within chapter two. These included; external governmental influences, funding cuts and changing contractual conditions and cultures. As discussed, Lyons and LaBosky (2002) refer to narratives as an authentic way to understand teaching from the view point of the teacher, and the narrative and metaphors associated with the visual images formed an important aspect of the analysis phase, providing revealing detail of an individual's Ti in relation to the main question and areas of interest within the study.

The holistic approach adopted towards undertaking the data analysis, utilising key phrases sentences and metaphors throughout the different stages was an important aspect in both refining the data, establishing relationships between the primary and secondary subjects and capturing the complexity and detail within and between the participant transcripts. Section

4.1 outlines how participant transcripts were selected within the findings linked to the data analysis process.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The study included participants from the four campuses of the merged college outlined and needed to comply with the ethics policy of the institution (Israel and Hay 2006). As the merged college worked with ten HE partners there was an ethics policy in place based on the Wolverhampton University process and procedure. This was used as the basis for considering issues of confidentiality and anonymity for participants as well as gaining permission from the college for the study, which was granted by the Principal. I also discussed and agreed with each participant the nature of the research, its intended purposes and how the results may be used, such as possible presentations to staff and others and the publication of any findings. Consent forms were agreed with each participant covering aspects such as personal anonymity, confidentiality of data produced, and the ability to withdraw from the study at any time (Zeni 1998).

I also reflected on my role as an insider researcher outlined earlier in this chapter and any implications and concerns associated with this for those taking part in the research. In particular, the nature of the professional relationships, any issues regarding my role as a manager within the institution (Zeni 1998). A variety of measures were put in place in order to minimise these effects and ensure participants felt no sense of obligation to be involved in the study. No participants were personally managed by me or linked in any way to my

organisational role. Further to this, any interviews were not seen in any way as a duty being requested by a manager, or part of the completion of any contractual hours. The initial meeting with participants made it clear that the study was completely independent of the institution and any participation would need to be outside of their normal contractual duties.

I also felt it was important to discuss with participants the potential of the research to change their attitudes and opinions through being involved in a process of critical reflection related to their Ti. Although this was considered to be one of the real strengths of the methodology, I was conscious that it may encourage participants to change, or challenge their role, or relationship within the organisation (Gleeson and James 2007). Equally, an increased self-awareness may also cause a sense of frustration or de-motivation within the participant (Ball 2007), when they consciously and critically reflected on aspects of their role and relationship with the organisation (Johnson 2001). However, it may also have provided the opportunity for change and development (Mezirow 1996).

All participant names used within the study are pseudonyms in order to protect the anonymity of the participants. Equally, detail of the college and its location is general and could apply to a number of institutions within the West Midlands at the time of the mergers and of undertaking the study.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has detailed the approach towards undertaking the research outlined in chapter one, it has also sought to further an understanding of the power of visual images to develop powerful and rich metaphors and narrative. The chapter has discussed the research methods and framework for analysis from which the findings of the study are based. Chapter four will present the findings based on each of the three research themes that emerged from the data analysis outlined.

Chapter Four Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will use the key themes developed from the analysis outlined in chapter three as a basis from which to consider what the data tells us about the main question set for the study. In particular, how do FE teachers and teacher managers develop and maintain their professional identities against a backdrop of the marketization of the FE sector and what impact have these changes had on an individual teachers' ability to enact their own Ti. Further to this, what effect has marketization had on notions of professionalism within the sector and in what ways have these new discourses and the development of NPM altered what it means to be professional within FE.

The chapter uses a variety of narrative extracts and visual images from each of the twelve participants to illustrate different aspects of the three themes and their contribution towards the study (Creswell and Miller 2000). Participant images from either of the activities set were used within each section based on the power of the narrative and metaphors to develop key points in relation to the research question and areas of interest within the study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011). These included participant accounts demonstrating different levels of agency in relation to their role as a teacher and the impact of these in different decision making contexts. They also included changes to teacher roles and priorities and the influence of individual biographies on the teacher's journey and Ti. In some cases these built personal capacity and in others prior experience further enhanced feelings of loss within changed cultures. In some instances both participant images were used to demonstrate the links between an individual's journey and their view of being a

teacher in others one aspect was used, ensuring each participant made a contribution to the findings and the findings provided as much detail as possible in relation to the main question.

The strategy adopted aimed to ensure a full range of the variation in responses in relation to each key theme was captured in the data presented in the findings (Norris 1997) in order that the findings represented the data analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994). This involved utilising participant transcripts (Maxwell 1992) and as highlighted, presenting clear narrative accounts using the participants 'own words and concepts' (1992, p.289) ensuring consistency between the views of participants and the researchers representation of them (Coughlan and Cronin 2007).

Following the introduction, the chapter will outline the three themes emerging from the data and each theme will then be developed as an individual section. This will be followed by a summary of the chapter which will lead in to the conclusions of the study in chapter five. Given the inter-linking nature of Ti there will be aspects of each of the narratives presented here which may have resonance within other sections in the findings. Where it is useful to the development of the arguments presented this cross-over will be discussed and commented on to enhance the development of the study. Chapter five will draw together the conclusions of the findings and link these back to the literature, theoretical framework and research questions. This will culminate in development and discussion of a conceptual model of FE Ti, which will utilise a number of concepts drawn from the literature review and the outcomes of the findings to produce a visual representation of FE Ti.

4.2 Key themes emerging from the data

As outlined in chapter three a four stage process was used in analysing the data, beginning with twenty five codes, which following the analysis of the narrative responses from participants were refined down to three themes. As discussed the process was influenced by the key research question and areas of interest set for the study the findings of the pilot study and the experience and positioning of the writer (section 1.4).

The themes that emerged from the data were:

- Issues of agency (own or prescribed identity) (Inside / outside the classroom)
- Professional values and beliefs as a teacher
- The impact of key events and people (biography)

The first two themes were in some ways inter-linked, as they are within the literature. The influence of factors particularly at a meso organisational level, such as NPM on an individual's agency to act in ways which reflect their own Ti was an important research theme. The analysis identified a distinction between an individual's agency within and outside the classroom, with several participants discussing having greater freedom inside the classroom environment.

The role of professional values and beliefs was the second distinct research theme. In particular, changes to colleges' notions of professionalism and their impact on the professional values and beliefs of individual participants. There was evidence of the importance of the values and beliefs to the individual in terms of exercising their professional judgement within their role and the tension between priorities set by the

organisation and the potential dis-connect with the teacher's own values and beliefs. This was particularly apparent over the priority for regularised performativity data, set against a focus on teaching and learning.

The impact of key events and people was seen in both of the visual tasks set for the study, but more notably in the image of the teacher's journey. For some participants, the teaching journey focused on their own development and changes over time, while several participants highlighted the influence of specific events or individuals on their journey. Participants used these within the narrative to frame specific developmental moments or particular aspects of their beliefs and values in relation to teaching.

4.3 Issues of agency inside and outside the classroom

4.3.1 Introduction

The literature identifies teacher agency as an important influence on the formation and development of Ti (Hamilton 2007). In particular, the influence of NPM and wider neoliberal discourses, on organisational conditions, controls and the expectations they exert on the individual to behave in certain ways (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). This section will provide the accounts of seven participants, both teachers and teacher managers, looking at variations in individual agency both in and outside the classroom environment. It will discuss the potential impact of the discourse of marketization (Lucas and Crowther 2016) and the influence of NPM (Smith and O'Leary 2013) on individual teachers and teacher managers.

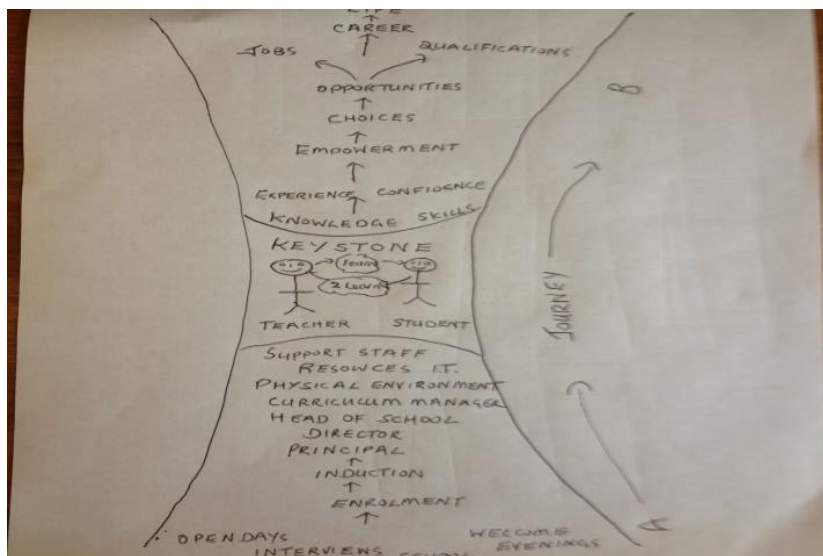
The first three participant images and narrative in this section provide an insight into the variety of responses to marketization, demonstrating agentic behaviour and the negative effects of limited agency on an individual's Ti.

4.3.2 Participant Sandra was a mid-career teacher working in teacher training, following five years working with supported learners developing literacy and numeracy skills. Sandra had originally worked at college C in basic skills and had moved following the merger of the college (A, B & C) into teacher training. This involved working with teachers and managers from across the institution, which in staff numbers was four times as large as the pre-merger college C with a variety of distinct cultures which were still forming and changing, particularly following the final college merger in 2009. Sandra was interviewed in 2010 approximately a year after the final merger and following the amalgamation of the two teacher training teams. This new role also involved working with many trainee teachers at the start of their careers and seeing their development during the course of the programme. Sandra's teaching journey is outlined in section (4.5.2) and in combination with this introduction provide an outline of Sandra's professional biography.

Sandra's visual image focused on the relationship between the teacher, learner and the purpose of the organisation. The image referred to teachers as the 'keystone' in a bridge (**Figure Nine**) with the institution depicted as the bridge. The metaphor outlined the role of the college (and education) as enabling learners to travel from one side of the bridge to the other. Without the bridge, students would be unable to complete their educational journey,

while at the same time *'the journey'* was the reason and purpose for the bridge to exist, *'holding up the education process'*. Importantly, for Sandra, these two elements were seen as the purpose of a college, as opposed to the size and grandeur of the bridge (college) as a structure.

Figure Nine



Sandra discussed an essential element of the education process being teachers, who both supported the college and also enabled students to complete their educational journey.

When asked 'Do you think institution sees the relationship between the student and the teacher as the keystone in the bridge?' Sandra replied:

No, I think the institution sees the institution, I think the institution sees the bridge, I don't think the institution is very good at seeing what it is that if you take it out the bridge will fall apart

The participant felt the low value given to the student/teacher relationship was at least in part because managers did not see the importance of teachers, instead, value was given to buildings and structures and their maintenance and development were seen as both the purpose of the organisation and as a measure of its success. This reflects the comments of Lucas and Crowther (2016) discussing the logic of incorporation valuing particular discourses and ignoring others as they are deemed of no value.

Sandra's teaching journey (Section 4.5.2 - figure Twenty One) had a strong sense of being grounded, the roots and branches acting as powerful metaphors to explore the development of her beliefs and values in relation to education. These also reflected the metaphors and narrative of the teaching role and were used to remain positive about teaching despite increasing organisational change and uncertainty.

We could work smarter, be more effective. I think there is a lot of fear, I think a lot of my colleagues don't feel positive in the way I do. I think for a lot of teachers teaching is a stress generating aspect of their life not a positive aspect

Sandra discussed the inability of the bridge to fulfil its function if the keystone collapses (this reflected a large increase in academic staff sickness at the college since the final merger in 2009):

You are a pivotal point, you are a keystone. All the energy and force is transmitted through the keystone. We often say students are the most important element, but if the teachers are not functioning, they get a bad experience and then the students say don't go there

This strong sense of agency was also grounded in skills and knowledge and values and beliefs, which enabled Sandra to resist the impact of meso and macro level changes and remain positive about her role in the college. The image points to a key area of tension within FE over the role and function of teachers and the purpose of the college and education. Being clear about this purpose helped Sandra to focus and prioritise activities associated with teaching and learning. This was further strengthened by the institution being unable to see the importance of the student teacher relationship. The narrative outlined suggests Sandra acted 'intentionally' to achieve a quality of outcome which reflected the importance of the student teacher relationship (Pantic 2015). Furthermore, it reflects the participant's high level of focus associated with teaching and learning, while tasks associated with performativity were given a lower priority. This was at the core of Sandra's ability to maintain and develop her personal capacity and professional capital within the context outlined. Sandra's ability to focus on teaching and learning meant she evaluated new decision making contexts with teaching and learning as a central focus, this enabled Sandra to assign performativity tasks less emphasis giving her greater agency in deciding role priorities, based on the strong beliefs and values outlined. This is discussed in more detail in chapter five.

4.3.3 Participant Stan felt that enacting his identity as a teacher involved challenging the rules or discourses within the college if they were not in the best interest of the students. Stan was an experienced FE teacher with over twenty years' service within the sector in addition to a wide variety of work experience prior to entering FE. This included serving in the army during the Falklands war and as a policeman and civil servant. Stan started his

teaching career in college B and moved over to college A following their merger in 2004.

Stan had moved from a business studies department, to a more specialist law department in the merged college focussing mainly on the delivery of 'A' level qualifications. Stan was interviewed in 2011 two years after the final merger following an integration of the law departments across the college with the appointment of a curriculum manager originally from college D in the new structure.

When asked about the influence of his work experiences on his Ti, Stan referred to expectations that he behave in certain ways by management. He had been '*pulled in*' by his Programme Manager for not using the '*class in progress*' sign adopted by the college to let students know they were not able to join the lesson. He commented:

As a teacher, I felt it was far better to discuss lateness individually with each student and if you have a good relationship with your group you don't need to put a sign on the door

He said he was willing to get a '*rap on the knuckles*' if he felt it was in the best interest of the learners. He commented that it was also in his own '*self-interest*' as he saw it, because he was a more successful teacher through pushing the boundaries and although the college would want his results, it wouldn't necessarily approve of the methods. He felt that if he didn't get the results, then he would be happy to be called to account, but if he did get the results:

Please leave me to exercise my professional judgement

The discussion then pursued the idea of pushing boundaries and if Stan had changed over time, given the nature of his previous careers that were perhaps quite focused on following rules and procedures. Stan referred to separating out the wider college environment and the classroom:

I've always regarded the classroom as my territory, this is where I'm lord and master

He went on to explain how he had developed his own individual teaching style, linked to his experience and this had shaped his identity as a teacher.

I feel I have my own unique relationship with students, which will be different from every other teacher, but it works for me

He was clear that his agency and autonomy was because of his focus on teaching and learning and also his experience and stage in his career:

Because I've only got ten years to retirement, I'm willing to get my knuckles rapped as long as I think I'm doing the right thing. That is the difference between a teacher with 20 years' experience and one with 5 years' experience

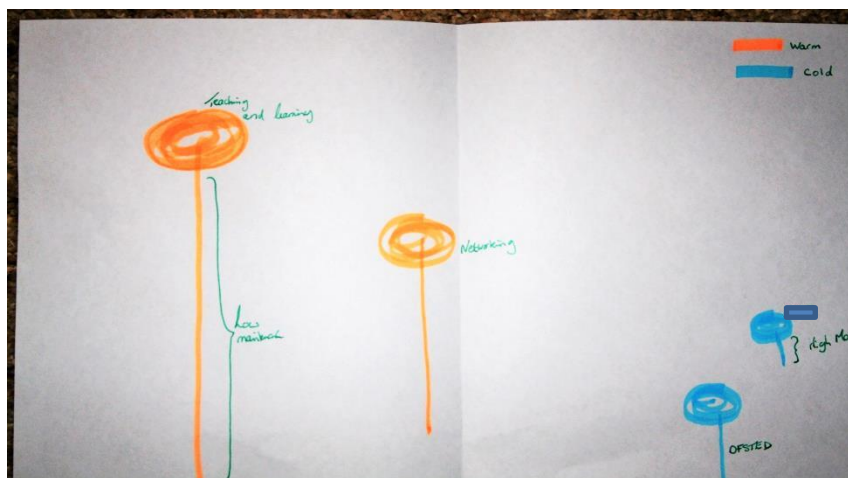
The idea of teachers enacting their identities and professionalism within a classroom setting is a powerful one suggesting a separating out of the college, between the classroom environment associated with teaching and learning and the wider college environment impacted by managerialism. As with Sandra, Stan was able to enact his own beliefs and values in different decision making contexts. This allowed him to place teaching and learning as a central focus in deciding between competing priorities, as opposed to being pushed to spend more time focused on performativity tasks

The extracts, point to Stan taking control of the classroom environment as a 'social space' (Fligstein and McAdam 2012) in order to enact his identity as a teacher. The statements also show a belief that individuals' exercising their professional judgement is intimately linked to success for the organisation. Stan felt that this raised the question of whether his behaviour was tolerated because he was a successful teacher or whether Stan's Programme Manager actually agreed with him, but had to be seen to be enacting policy. Briggs (2003) discusses the pressure for managers to be seen to be acting as 'agents' of the college.

On studying the college's lateness policy it was clear that after a designated time the teacher should put up the class in progress sign and send late students to the duty manager, thus in effect removing the autonomy of the teacher to make a decision about whether to allow entry to the class or not. Stan pointed out that in most cases the Duty Manager would then bring the student back up to the class and allow them entry to the lesson, which he felt seemed to further erode the authority and judgement of the teacher.

Stan's teaching metaphor (**Figure Ten**) explores aspects of teacher autonomy and professional judgement by looking at the amount of time spent undertaking different activities. The activities were depicted using different coloured plates spinning on varying lengths of pole. The colder plates on shorter poles, required more spinning, while, the warmer plates on longer poles needed less focus.

Figure Ten



Stan described the colder plates being linked to administrative duties and data collection routines for the college, which the teacher had to undertake on a regular basis, but over which they had limited control. The warmer plates represented activities more directly associated with teaching and learning. The image and metaphors very effectively expose some of the pressures around the control teachers have in deciding the order and priority over different activities. I asked what Stan meant by the college logo placed on one of the cold plates, he referred to the new college branding and logo, not only being a marketing tool, but also representing a '*culture of the organisation with its own catchphrase*'. The phrase depicted a unique way of working, with a charter linked to it. Teachers were expected to adopt the charter and physically sign up to the expectations within it. He felt the branding changes, were part of a college wide process, which had resulted in attempts to change his role, by pushing him to spend more time spinning the '*cold college branded plates*'. Given this, he could go a whole week without having to spin the teaching and learning plates. However, the cold college branded plates needed almost constant attention.

He discussed the temptation to focus on the plates requiring the most attention, while being aware that this would result in less emphasis being paid to what he saw as his core role teaching and learning:

The debate we are really having is about what is the role of the teacher, the role of the teacher is to push those boundaries, you cannot go through life without making waves, and you can't as teachers be popular all the time, we're not paid to be popular, we're paid to be effective and there are times when frankly we have to break the rules, and if that means we get our knuckles rapped then so be it. It doesn't follow the model that is expected, but if it is the best way to do things, I know I'm not going to be popular, but on this point it is worth being unpopular

The start of this narrative echoes the central question of this study and shows the ability of individual teacher's within an FE context to understand the wider debate over the role of the teacher and the tension over who decides how teachers prioritise their focus. The ability to be able to see this wider debate in context offers the potential for the individual to act with more agency through critically reflecting on their own position and the role of education. According to Priestly, Biesta and Robinson (2015) the teachers within schools within their study had less ability to see this wider context, which potentially acted negatively on their individual agency. For Stan it was clearly part of the value base that enabled him to resist negative meso level influences.

Stan also pointed to the negative impact of external governmental influence, as he saw it, when discussing the college's mission and purpose:

With a more formalised structure we have replaced the idea of asking your manager or your manager's manager a question, with you looking for the answer on share-point. The information is there, but can

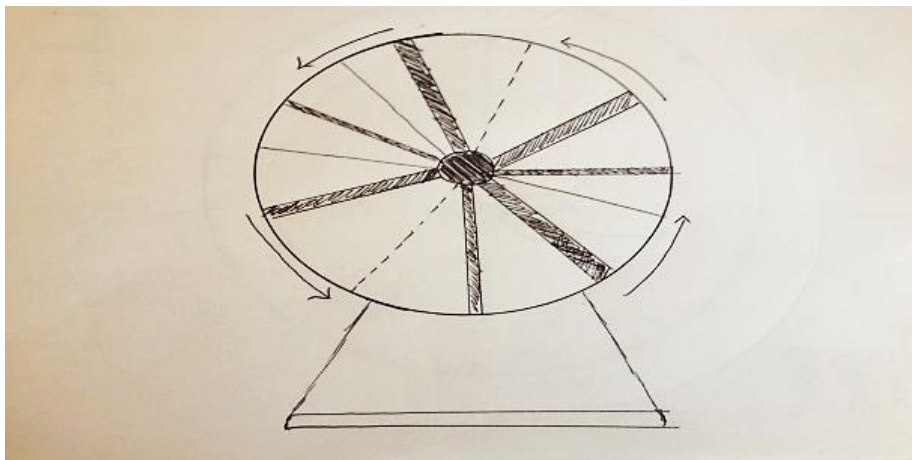
you find it, how do you prioritise. The college seems unable to identify what its mission really is! We should be able to identify this is where we are going and what we stand for. I don't get the sense of a short, middle and long term view for the college, more to the point I don't get a sense of who is going to tell me what our mission is with the exception of perhaps the principal. I think there are government expectations of how we will act and if we step outside of these we will be penalised, you will be seen as failing. I don't think it is healthy

This is a bold statement and goes to the heart of this study. The lack of any clear mission for the college as an independent organisation provides an insight into the power of macro level governmental forces which control the funding and audit functions of the organisation. It also suggests that the corporate branding and charter referred to earlier, which should be directly linked to the college's mission, are in fact mechanisms aimed at controlling teachers, rather than providing direction for the organisation. Stan's statement infers that the college's lack of focus is due at least in part to the influence of these external factors, and this resonates with the opening statement in this study made by Lingfield (2012), further highlighted by Keep (2014), referring to post incorporation changes weakening colleges in the name of control and accountability. This is seen as an important finding, which will be explored further in chapter five.

4.3.4 In comparison to Sandra and Stan participant Dave felt that the post incorporation changes to FE had fundamentally altered how he perceived his role as a teacher. Dave was an end of career teacher who had originally been employed at college A prior to the mergers outlined. Dave was interviewed in 2010 and as with Stan the science curriculum area in which he worked had been amalgamated after the final merger and Dave now taught across three campuses of the merged institution.

Dave was clear about the relationship between the individual and the organisation and his ability to enact his identity as a teacher. As a very experienced teacher with over thirty years of service at the time of the interview, split between schools and further education, Dave's teaching image (**figure Eleven**) reflected the relationship between the teacher and the organisation through a period of on-going change. The metaphors serve to illuminate the complexity of the agency/structure debate within FE. In particular, the notion of being positioned by the organisation and the sense of powerlessness created by the pace of change and increasing complexity of the teaching role. Dave used the image of a spinning wheel to represent the role of the teacher the metaphor showed the lecturer at the centre, with the many spokes outlining the varied and different skills required to undertake the role.

Figure Eleven



The participant discussed the thickness of the spokes originally developed to be a successful teacher being reduced as he had been pushed to develop new spokes, i.e. skills, associated with managerial requirements for data. He felt these had diminished his core strengths as a teacher.

He commented:

My job in the centre of the wheel is to keep myself balanced and to balance the myriad of jobs that make up the role of being a teacher. This carries a huge burden keeping the wheel revolving and balanced. The wheel represents the forces that impinge on the lecturer, what is not well thought through is the emotional balancing act that the lecturer undertakes

When asked whether depicting teachers at the centre of the wheel represented their power, Dave commented that lecturers were positioned by the organisation to be in the middle, so they acted as a mechanism through which to get things done.

The power is illusionary, students have power over the lecturer, managers have power over the lecturer, support-staff have power over the lecturer and other agencies have power over the lecturer. The lecturer has to absorb all this pressure, all these shocks, and it suits people to keep the lecturer in the middle, because otherwise the pressure would be on them

The notion of being positioned is likely to impinge directly on an individual's perception of their role and relationship with the organisation. Gleeson discusses teachers being positioned by the organisation as part of the development of a new discourse within FE, part of the wider 'public sector modernisation project' (2005, p.448.). As highlighted in chapter two this discourse privileges recipient needs rather than providers, and this helps re-inforce the shift in power from teachers to central government (Leitch 2006). This links to the visual metaphor of the spinning wheel and the need to keep developing more spokes in the wheel (skills/activities of the teacher), many of which were not related to the core role of preparing and planning for teaching. As opposed to the two previous participants, Dave's identity as a teacher had been negatively affected by changes to the college's culture and focus and these had influenced his evaluative judgement in new decision making contexts (Priestly, Biesta

and Robinson 2015). The development of new skills/spokes focused on performativity routines, reflected Dave's inability to focus on teaching and learning assigning it a more peripheral focus, while other tasks associated with performativity routines were given a more central focus.

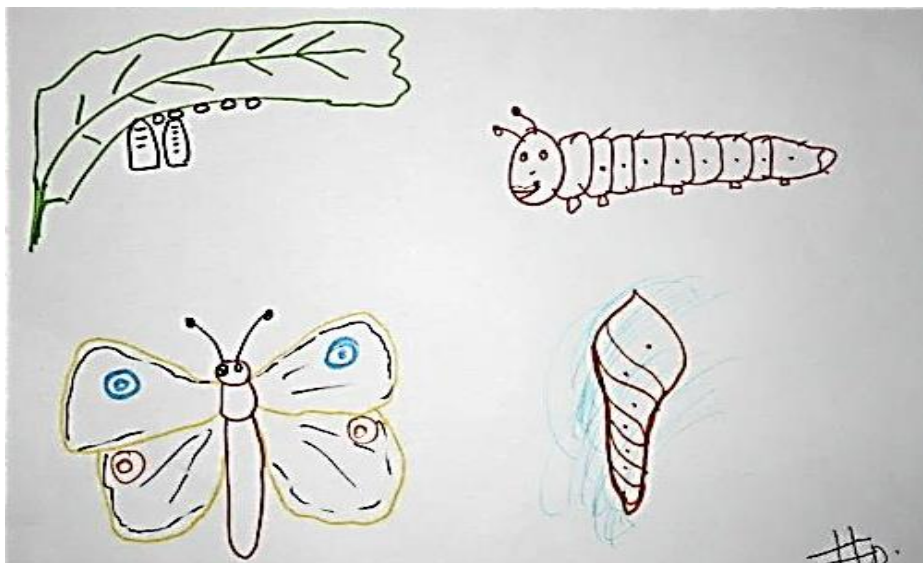
Dave's description of the changes to FE, sit in marked contrast to the image of his teaching journey, which depicted the developmental stages of a butterfly (**Figure Twelve**). Dave used the biological lifecycle to represent the changes a teacher goes through as they gain experience and skills over time. The image reflects the richness of these changes and what they meant for Dave as a teacher, they also serve as a more general metaphor for the changes that Dave felt teachers go through as they gain experience.

Dave began his career as a researcher who originally intended to develop an academic career, however, his desire to focus on teaching developed while delivering teaching sessions during the completion of his PhD (Doctor of Philosophy). He discussed how this experience opened up the possibility of teaching as a career and he felt that for most teachers the idea of teaching as a career germinated over time. This is reflected in the literature (Johnson 2001) and with other participants within this study, notably participant Sandra who discussed the influence of teachers from primary school as part of the journey to becoming a teacher.

Dave identified the next stage, (changing into a caterpillar) being categorised by its distinct shape and adaptations as well as a voracious and indiscriminate appetite for food. He linked this to a new teacher's thirst for knowledge and drive and energy for change and development.

The teaching career begins with 'some kind of fertilisation and growth. A germ of an idea some kind of development, eventually you will grow over the course of your lifecycle. You try new things you try as a young teacher. Having tried everything you go into a period of contemplation or – you go to sleep a little bit, you've tried all of these things and then you think so what! Then hopefully out comes the butterfly, a recognised form, the pinnacle of your achievement, masterful, slick, becoming really good at your job

Figure Twelve



Dave pointed to colleges needing a mix of staff at different stages of the development cycle in order to ensure the organisation was successful. He felt the increase in colleges employing younger, less experienced, cheaper staff and part time hourly paid staff who were indiscriminately eating and gaining knowledge, was creating an imbalance in staffing which was likely to impact on the students' experience and success for the institution.

Dave discussed the image being seen as an idealised view of teacher development, and that some teachers would never become butterflies, either through lack of skills, or not being supported to develop to the next stage. He discussed certain staff being viewed by managers as permanently in a particular stage of development and this impacted negatively on their career development:

*We encourage more egg laying as opposed to enabling staff to become butterflies, because it is cheaper'
Managers talk about needing young blood, but this is incongruent, because how old are they?*

Gleeson and Keep (2004) discuss the desire of employers within FE to reproduce the 'existing class order' (p.39) and this being part of the wider managerialist project within the sector to maintain control. Smith (2015) also discusses the move from more experienced staff to those who mirrored changing college values. The focus on egg-laying outlined by Dave, with less emphasis on the development of teachers has the potential to negatively affect the quality and variety of teaching received by the students.

Opportunities for development and growth which enabled me to become a butterfly I can't imagine that happening now, as it is very alien for people to be sponsored to do MAs or PhDs or to be allowed to have a sabbatical. Staff development now all has to be targeted and focused on short term goals, which they often don't achieve. Longer term development is not valued in the same way and is often resented by the organisation

The proliferation of government policies and targets related to the FE sector has ensured that organisations are pushed to focus resources on staff development directly related to short term goals and priorities (Wolf 2015). Dave felt that one of the key reasons that the organisation did not value longer term self-development for individual staff was because it had lost the ability to identify its own development needs, by not being able to effectively

reflect on its own position as an educational institution. He compared an FE college to the natural world and the theory of evolution. By not understanding its purpose '*teaching and learning*' he felt the colleges risked becoming extinct. This reflects the comments of participant Stan regarding the college lacking a mission and managers being replaced by share-point.

The last change in Dave's metaphor involved the release of the butterfly as the final stage of development, '*the pinnacle of achievement*'. However, he also reiterated that this phase is finite:

The final stage is brief, butterflies don't live very long, and they are delicate and easily damaged.

Related to teaching, this could mean retirement or getting the chop

Dave showed the ability to reflect on both his position as a teacher as well as that of the wider organisation and FE sector in terms of issues concerning teacher development and professionalism. The metaphors also depict the effect of the changes to the sector on the value given to teachers who are viewed as a cost which needs to be controlled at the expense of experience and individual development. This calls into question the assumption that the FE sector is ready to be self-regulating (Lingfield 2012) if staff are still operating in a very regulated, autocratic culture (Wolf 2009).

4.3.5 In comparison to the teacher images outlined, participant Doug, a senior manager, was clear about the potential conflict between his formal organisational position and his teaching role. Doug originally worked as a manager in college D prior to the merger in 2009 and was

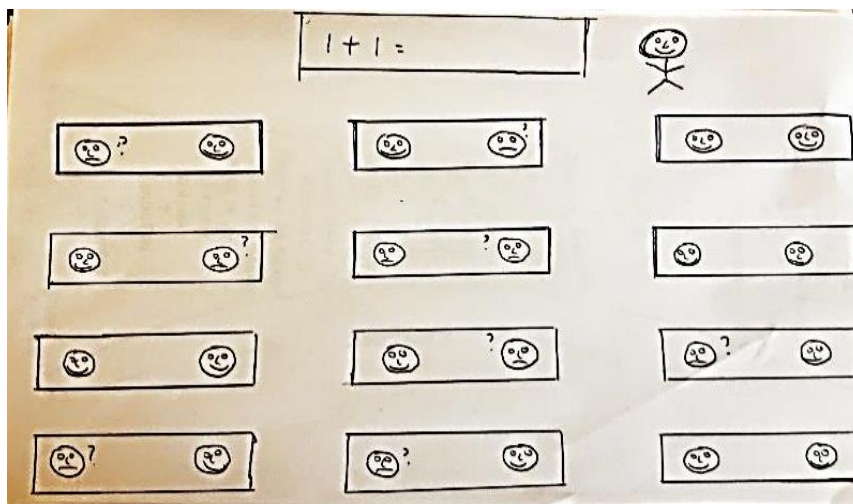
part of the senior management team both prior and post-merger gaining a new role following all managers being re-interviewed for positions within a new post-merger structure.

In the discussion of his teaching metaphor (**Figure Thirteen**) he used the notion of an idealised teaching situation in terms of student numbers and classroom layout, which would facilitate the best learning environment and contrasted it with the actual teaching situation. In the actual situation the group size was larger and there was less room for the teacher to move around and facilitate learning. Doug discussed the image showing the number of students required for a group to be economically viable in terms of maintaining the financial prosperity of the college. As can be seen the image of the teacher student relationship is far more ordered and static than Sandra's journey across the bridge, which suggests movement and change. It reflects a more organised and hierarchical relationship and a different view of knowledge acquisition, learning and the role of the teacher and learner. These differences are at least in part a reflection of the room layout, which by its design has restricted the ability of the teacher to adopt a student-centred approach. The differences reflect the identities of Sandra and Doug as teachers, how they view the student/teacher relationship and the role and function of the organisation. They also reflect differences in the two participants' organisational positions and the focus of their different roles. When Doug was asked 'do you think as a teacher you are still concerned with getting the most people in the class' he replied:

If I'm a teacher no, but I'm a management teacher aren't I. Here, I'm trying to get the balance between the minimum class size and learning space for me to get around

Doug's sense of an idealised teaching environment was tempered by responsibility as a senior manager to maintain a secure financial basis for the college. These competing responsibilities are moderated and mediated by the individual in conjunction with the policies and procedures of the organisation, relationships with other colleagues and perhaps most importantly the wider post-incorporation political landscape (Gleeson et al 2006).

Figure Thirteen



This pragmatic view of the teaching situation, Doug argued was a reflection of his organisational role as a (manager/ teacher). As a senior manager, Doug was regularly exposed to the financial realities of income and expenditure and the need to maximise resources. These factors had shaped both his identity as a manager, and as a teacher. When asked about whether teaching and learning was at the centre of the business Doug replied:

Yes and no, I think it should be, but I think often it isn't it gets side lined, it should be as that's the business

This suggests the potential for organisations within a marketised environment to promote self-interest and survival above the wider social goals of education (Davies 2017). It also reflects the potential development of a 'new culture' as outlined by participant Stan, where organisations are unclear about their purpose. Linked to this, Doug discussed some Directors not being prepared to say anything in meetings or challenge the status quo; he felt you shouldn't surround yourself with people who just say *yes*:

I get quite frustrated with some directors who are not prepared to say what they think, because they pay me quite a bit of money and if they don't want to know what I think then just tell me and I'll just pick up the money. I should be there to say something; you're hopefully not paying me the salary you're paying me to just sit there and agree with everything that is being said, because otherwise I don't need to be there. There are some people who wouldn't say stuff, even when they disagreed with what was being put forward and you knew they disagreed with what was being put forward. They would either politically keep quiet, or nod or stuff like that

This provides us with an insight into decision making at a senior level within a college environment. It points to the fact that some managers are unwilling to act on their own values and beliefs and in so doing do not act as mediators or moderators to external change, which may further legitimate and enforce the neo-liberal ideology discussed in chapter two.

The study findings also identified a distinct difference in the impact of the external influences on managers at different levels of the organisation. The next two participants (first tier managers) showed very different levels of agency in comparison to participant Doug.

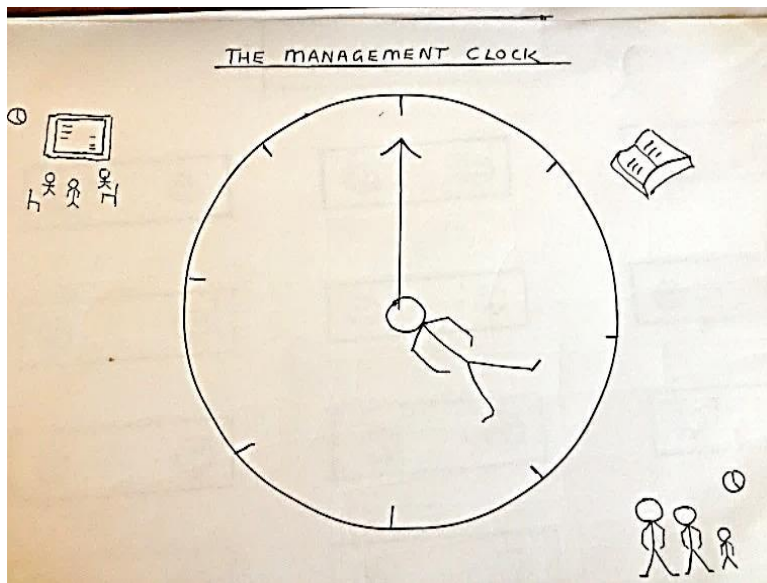
4.3.6. Participant Liz was a first tier manager, who commented on feelings of a lack of agency linked to her managerial role. Liz had started her teaching career at college A following nearly ten years in the banking sector, and was quickly promoted to the position of Curriculum Manager for Access to Higher Education programmes. Following a period of maternity leave, Liz came back to college as a part-time member of staff and was later appointed as Curriculum Manager for Teacher Training in the merged college (2010). Liz was interviewed in 2011 after a year in this new role.

As opposed to Doug who was able to distinguish between what he saw as idealised and pragmatic views concerning the purpose of the college and the teacher's role within it, Liz felt her lack of agency came in part from a lack of formal organisational authority. As a first tier manager (FTM) the participant felt there was a real tension between a heavy teaching load and significant management responsibilities. On paper the role involved an equal split between the teaching and management aspects of the job; however she felt that the management aspect occupied far more time than teaching.

The management role is much larger than the 50% and the day to day tasks scream at you, there are dire consequences if they aren't completed. I would say that the management function makes up more than 75% of my time. This means you condense the teaching into this smaller portion of time, but you use your experience to help you to enable that to happen

Liz felt unable to focus on teaching, which was the aspect of the role she got the most pleasure from.

Figure Fourteen



Liz - 'The image shows me stuck on the clock, this is the management clock

Interviewer - it looks as though you are part of the clock's machinery, you are a hand of the clock, and you are controlled by the machine

Liz - 'Yes, and therefore other things become secondary. At my level, the management role is about compliance, it is a role of complying with other people's requests rather than the scope to develop your own ideas, it's not empowering.

As outlined in chapter two, Page (2011) discusses the potential for FTMs in FE to experience trialectic pressures as opposed to the dialectic pressures of middle and senior managers. For Page, these apply more specifically to FTMs because of their position within the organisation. He discusses FTMs being dragged between competing pressures, which precipitates a reactive management style where 'firefighting is not a product of a lack of planning efficacy, but a direct outcome of the trialectic' (p.111).

Liz's image showed the effect of meso level influences on her agency, being stuck to the clock and part of its movement provided a powerful metaphor of control and dis-empowerment. Further to this, the unrealistic expectations regarding the percentage of time allocated to each aspect of the role applied an additional pressure to be negotiated. Liz discussed sacrificing her own enjoyment of teaching to ensure students, staff and managers' needs were satisfied. This potentially reflects the position of 'martyr' as outlined by Page, where the individual is 'dragged between foci, reactively addressing what is the current imperative' (2011, p.117).

Liz's metaphor also has a small image of her family again with a clock in the background. She commented '*Sometimes when you have some family time, and go back on the email or get a phone call, you get a shock about what you've missed*'. This shows the pressure for staff in relation to the balance of time between work and family.

4.3.7 Participant Florence, a recently promoted Programme Manager, also highlighted the impact of a lack of control over activities on her agency and identity as a teacher and a mother. Florence had previously been employed as a curriculum leader and prior to her promotion a teacher for over ten years in primary, secondary and FE. Florence started work at college B on a part-time basis for several years prior to obtaining a full time position. Florence was promoted to Curriculum Manager of Access to Higher Education programmes as part of the merged college in 2010. This involved re-locating to a new campus (which had been college D prior to merger). Florence was interviewed in 2011 and discussed feeling a

'total lack of agency' during the first meeting, as a manager and a teacher. This was reflected in her image of being a teacher (**Figure Fifteen**) which shows a multi-armed person like Shiva, only without the God like powers, undertaking a variety of different activities at the same time. She commented:

I have no control over the number and variety of tasks I undertake at any one time and this leads to me 'feeling like crap

She referred to the rear-most arm in the picture being the one that was involved in teaching, which she wasn't able to focus on at all.

I'm going into classes under prepared and this means I'm not enjoying my teaching

Figure Fifteen



This narrative echoes participant Stan's comments regarding the warm plates less frequently attended and Dave's weakened spokes, except here the power is in the way the pressures have materialised in her bodily form.

This expresses the physicality of the pressures and the unnatural burdens that have produced an unnatural adaptation. The front most arms reflect the task pressure associated with Florence's role, one arm is juggling balls, she commented, *balancing between work and family*, while another holds a fire extinguisher, which is described as being used to put out fires that *'constantly spring up at any time'*. Florence discussed feeling she had *'less agency than as a teacher'*.

As a Programme Manager you are more visible, and even more accountable, than as a lecturer but you still feel like you have limited control over the order and priority of tasks you have to deal with

This participant drew into focus the effect of limited autonomy/agency, combined with a heavy workload and multiple decision-making at any one time on an individual's Ti. Furthermore, the image identified the complete mis-match between participant expectations and the reality of the management role. The next section will further extend this discussion by looking at the impact of Florence's teaching journey on her professional status (4.4.2).

Further to the three manager participants outlined, two FTMs, who demonstrated reduced agency as a consequence of undertaking their roles and a senior manager whose agency was linked to acting as a corporate agent within his role, participant Brian's agency was linked to his focus on teaching and learning as a manager

4.3.8 Brian was a middle manager with over twenty years' experience in FE, at the same college, beginning his teaching career at college A where he was promoted to a middle

management role and retained this position as part of the merged college. As with other curriculum areas the Art and Design directorate had been amalgamated across campuses, but was deemed big enough to have two middle managers managing two separate teams autonomously across the main campuses of what had been college A and D. This was unusual in the merged college and led to separate areas of curriculum focus and displays of work at the end of year exhibitions.

Brian demonstrated great flexibility in adapting to external change at a macro and meso level that had influenced his role as a teacher and manager. Brian was clear about the relationship between his role and the external changes outlined, which he saw as something that needed to be '*negotiated*' in order for him to continue to focus on what he saw as the central aspect of his job.

I came to the college for 3-4 years but I've stayed for twenty one. I think I stayed because I felt I was being noticed and appreciated at the college. NVQs were a horrendous change for Art & Design, it made it too prescriptive, that's why I got involved in GNVQ nationally and began to try and change it from within. Later I became external verifier and lead moderator for EDEXCEL, again I tried to ensure that the college was at the fore-front of changes and kept ahead of what was happening

He continued:

I try to make sure the students have the best experience they can. It started out that I wanted to support students individually, but now I try to help all the staff to be able to support students

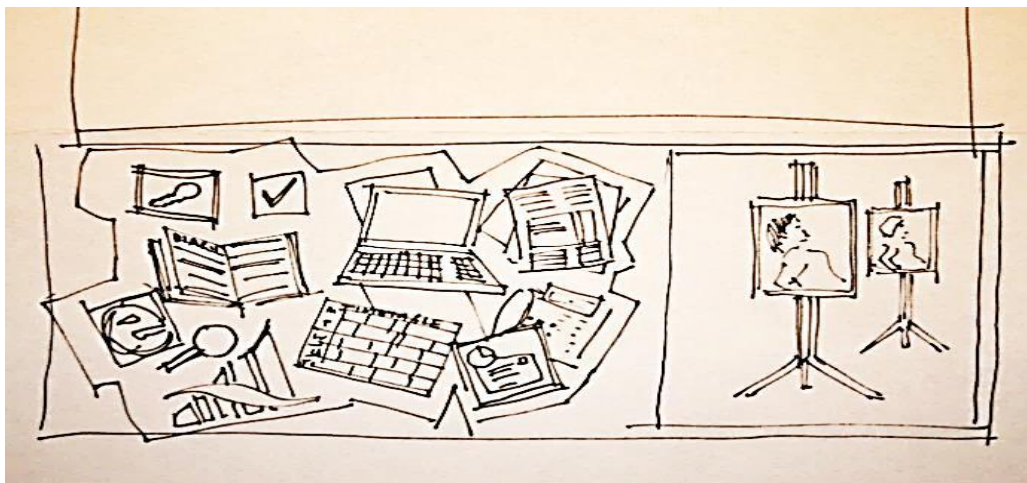
Brian's visual images reflected the changes that he had been through over the period of his career with the college:

The requirements of the organisation have changed, so you have to change. It has consistently become tighter, more paperwork to audit over time. It's about the balance of all the managerial things, that seem to come at you from all directions, and there is not a logical progression of the order they come in. Whereas the image of the teaching is a lot more controlled, and is meant to look a lot more controlled. The idea that you know exactly what is going on there - even if there are changes brought in by the students, they are controllable

We discussed the lack of autonomy he outlined within his managerial role, which Brian felt was mainly down to many of the management tasks being *ad hoc* and not planned for in the same way you could plan for teaching. He pointed to the managerial role often being reactive as opposed to proactive and this was reflected in his visual image (**Figure Sixteen**).

The metaphors explore the different aspects of the role with teaching outlined as vertical and organised whereas, the images in the managerial section were pictured at odd angles.

Figure Sixteen



The images related to the teaching role on the easels are interpretations, they are visual things, they are qualitative, whereas a lot of the things over here on the managerial side are quantitative, they are around measurement. But, we are measured in the great part of how we do the job, it's not about the student's exhibition of work at the end of the year, it's about the students results, which are calculated statistically. All the time we talk about student progress being retention, achievement and success.

What has been essential for me is holding on to the key aspects of teaching throughout these changes, it has helped me to keep motivated by not forgetting what really matters

Brian did not feel the disjointed nature of the management tasks affected his agency rather they were just issues to be dealt with as part of working within FE. Despite only spending around twenty percent of his time teaching, Brian still regarded himself as a teacher and this had helped him to remain grounded, motivated and clear about his role and purpose within the college. He viewed his management role as a way of helping to get things done for the staff and students.

It was clear throughout the discussion that Brian didn't experience the same type of trialectic pressures outlined by both programme managers and showed great flexibility and adaptability. When asked about having to implement difficult decisions he said:

A big part of my role is to put over changes in the most positive light. There are times when you get things coming through, say from an exam board and you think, why are you doing it this way, but if you have to follow their guidelines then you have to present it in a positive way. However, you need to be able to re-visit the decision if it doesn't work and try something new. I think being respected as an equal and as a professional makes a big difference

The last part of this statement is important as it reflects Brian's status within his team. He was still considered as a teacher who undertook management duties and given his position as a middle manager he had gained respect from staff because he still placed teaching at the centre of his responsibilities; this was an important element in his agency. Brian's ability to be flexible in his approach to decision-making, within his work role, without losing his focus

on students focus (the central aspect of his identity as a teacher) appeared to be a significant factor within Brian's success as a manager and a teacher. This links to the third way outlined by Ball (2005), which highlights the balance of being able to engage with the various political dialogues, while at the same time being founded on working relationships with colleagues and students at a micro level.

4.3.9 Summary

This section has identified the complex and contested nature of agency within the colleges in the sample. This included examples of agentive and prescribed behaviour by different participants. Sandra and Stan demonstrated an ability to resist the negative influences of marketization, which enabled them to enact their own sense of the teaching role, particularly within a classroom setting. In comparison, both, Dave, Florence and Liz referred to the changes leaving them feeling powerless and leading to de-professionalisation.

The findings also revealed that the negative impacts on identity were in large part due to specific tangible changes to participant roles, and that for some teachers prolonged exposure to the marketised FE sector impacted their agency to act in ways which reflected their beliefs and values. Most notable, the lack of agency Liz and Florence demonstrated as first tier managers affected by both the trialectic pressures outlined and a lack of formal authority.

In comparison, Doug's strong sense of agency was closely linked to his formal organisation position as a senior manager, which gave him an insight into college decision-making and influenced his identity as a teacher.

4.4 The influence of professional values and beliefs

4.4.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter two, professionalism is seen as the meeting point between an individual's agency as a teacher and the development of their professional identity. This leads us to consider that the term profession is 'socially constructed, dynamic and contested' (McCulloch et al. 2000, p.6) and involves the positioning of individuals in various ways which may well influence their individual identity (Robson et al. 2004). This section will further develop the analysis by reviewing the aspects of professionalism highlighted in the data through the visual images and narratives of four participants.

The first two participant narratives in this section follow the teaching journeys of Florence and Dave, whose teaching metaphors were outlined in the previous section. This will aim to provide a sense of the relationship and connections between an individual's identity as a teacher and their journey into teaching.

4.4.2 Participant Florence discussed the competing, trialectic demands on an FTM in the previous section, which impacted agency as a teacher and a manager. This section will explore Florence's teaching journey, which she described as *a process of de-professionalisation*.

(Figure Seventeen). The first part of the image shows Florence in her graduation gowns, she is smiling and clearly very happy. The next aspect of the image is a dotted line which takes an upward trend until Florence is appointed as a teacher following the completion of her PGCE. From this point onwards the dotted line takes a downward trajectory and ultimately finishes with Florence standing at the bottom of the dotted line naked with her academic robes spread on the ground beside her.

The metaphor of being stripped of professionalism and the vulnerability of the naked individual at the end of the dotted line is a profound visual statement, and in combination with Florence's narrative associated with the image demonstrates the connected nature of professional status/agency and Ti. Although Florence discussed lacking agency both as a manager and a teacher, it was clear from the interviews that the loss had very different causes. In the case of the managerial role, Florence pointed to a lack of control over decision-making and feeling she had made the wrong decisions. However, as a teacher she referred to her status declining as a result of feeling less effective, due to reduced time for preparation. The image and narrative draw into focus the connections between the tangible aspects of a teacher's role, their identity as a teacher and feelings and emotions in relation to professional status (Nias 1996)

I feel after fifteen years as a teacher and manager that I am no longer a teacher. I feel that my experiences have left me disempowered and have robbed me of my professional status. I don't think I'm a good teacher anymore and I think being a manager has further degraded my professional status, as I'm not really allowed to make decisions and decisions you do make are the wrong decisions. I don't feel I have any autonomy as a teacher or as a manager

Figure Seventeen



The image presents perhaps the most striking lack of agency in this study, impacting both managerial and teaching aspects of the role. Both Florence and Liz pointed to the task pressures that FTMs encounter and these affecting professional status and individual agency. This is reflected by Miller Marsh (2002) (outlined in our defining features of Ti) who discusses the potential of embedded discourses to have material consequences for the individuals located within them (p.462) and as discussed the image is a striking example of the potential consequences of prolonged exposure to the marketised FE sector. In combination, the lack of control over decision making and reduced time for lesson preparation proved a corrosive mix for Florence's perception of professional status both as a teacher and manager.

4.4.3 Participant Dave was able to reflect on pre and post incorporation views of the sector (see figures Eleven and Twelve in the previous section) and discussed post incorporation changes impacting the nature of the relationships between staff within the FE sector:

I don't think there is much philosophical discussion within the organisation about education, it's not engendered that we have colleagues that we can informally meet

So professionalism has changed then?

Yes I would go so far as to say that there is a pseudo professionalism Professionals acting independently of the organisation, but still attached to it, doesn't exist'. If it is all prescriptive, then you can't have autonomy at the same time. So for example if you're saying this week in tutorial you will teach x then that is prescription

He was asked how this felt:

I feel sad that the profession has not matured in the way that I thought it would'. There are huge expectations for people being reflective practitioners with zero time to allow them to do it

These statements point to changes in the very nature of the philosophy of education, the very aspects that root individuals to a wider sense of what it means to be a teacher. The notion of FE becoming 'pseudo professional' is very significant as it strikes to the very heart of the impact of the changes to the sector since incorporation. It is discussed by several writers, particularly in relation to the dominant neo-liberal ideology within the FE sector (Smith 2007; Ball 2007; Avis 2003; Avis and Bathmaker 2004).

The Cambridge Dictionary defines pseudo as 'affected and insincere' and the Oxford Dictionary further adds that it is something which is a 'sham and pretentious, quasi-fake'. The pseudo professionalism described by Dave suggests it is not another way of looking at professionalism it is in fact un-professional, because it lacks a common set of theories linked to beliefs about teaching and learning (James and Dufour 2000) as a basis on which to develop teachers as professionals and focus on improving teaching and learning. James and Dufour state there is:

'no theory of NPM nor a set of theories based on the common assumptions. It is an eclectic combination of theories drawn when useful from other disciplines. - there is no obvious hierarchy of ideas, no one key principle from which all others can be deduced' (James and Dufour 2000, p.582)

This identifies the real tension between teachers and the state in that NPM and the neo-liberal ideology outlined in this study lack a common set of principles in which to guide and motivate teachers based on teaching and learning.

Dave described the nature of pseudo professionalism as prescription, which limited the agency of the individual teacher to exercise their professional judgement one of the key aspects of being professional (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). Dave pointed to the lack of time for professional development along with the demand for staff to be reflective practitioners as a real tension for teachers within FE. The removal of autonomy outlined reflects an inability for teachers to meet both within and outside the college to discuss their practice. This is down to a myriad of changes including contractual conditions, higher teaching loads and large multi campus delivery models that have all reduced opportunities

to meet (Smith 2015). Further to this reduced funding to maintain cross sector meeting groups and the changing focus of managers driven by the need to satisfy government requirements for data have all influenced the development and maturation of the sector (Keep 2014). The lack of maturity within the sector reduces the opportunities afforded teachers to reflect on their practice a key aspect of improving teaching and learning (Clow 2001).

The next participant like Dave was also an end of career teacher and draws an interesting comparison to Dave in relation to the effects of extended exposure to the marketised environments outlined on the individual.

4.4.4 Participant Mike was an end of career teacher who demonstrated both resilience in terms of defining his Ti and in minimising the impact of marketization on the priorities and focus of his teaching role. Mike had been working at college A for ten years teaching basic skills, and prior to this had worked in the school sector for over twenty years (five years as a Head Teacher). Mike discussed having a nomadic early career, where he tried many different things, having decided teaching maybe a potential career route, he travelled around Europe, paying for his travels with a variety of different tutoring positions. He then committed more formally to a career in teaching and completed his teacher training gaining a range of experiences in different schools across the U.K. Mike's teaching metaphor (**Figure Eighteen**) was a series of images, the first of which reflected these potential pathways and different options at the start of his career.

Figure Eighteen



I was trying a lot of different things, and finding out a lot about myself, my strengths and what I was good at

Mike discussed the influence of a Head Teacher in one of the first secondary schools he taught in which had influenced his development and view of change:

He taught me the value of taking risks and making mistakes. He gave colleagues the space for them to go off and try things, even if they went wrong

Mike also identified the value of a range of professional development experiences he had undertaken, including a two year sabbatical a Diploma in counselling skills and Master's Degree in teaching for personal growth and awareness. These experiences had shaped both his view of the teacher student relationship and his teaching style, which he described as 'humanistic'. (Rogers 1986)

Mike took on a variety of management roles as his career developed, including spending sixteen years as a Deputy Head and Head Teacher of a large secondary comprehensive school. For two years, while he was Head at the school, it was in 'special measures' and he was regularly working eighty hours a week. He described this period as very stressful and felt he had an: *'imbalance between my professional and personal life'*. He discussed this being one of the least satisfying parts of his career and having more agency and empowerment as a college lecturer than as a Secondary Head Teacher.

He moved into FE following a brief period as an educational consultant, and discussed feeling *'re-invigorated'*

I feel appreciated at the college by my colleagues and managers, who respect my experience and the skills I've developed. I have enjoyed working as a teaching and learning mentor and mentoring trainee teachers

I asked Mike whether in his role he had been effected by changes to the sector :

'No, not really, maybe it is my personality, or my experience or a bit of both, but they don't have any impact on my motivation'.

Mike's experience and wide ranging professional development gave him a very strong sense of professional values and beliefs in relation to the role of teachers and the student teacher relationship. This, in combination with the high regard he was held in by colleagues and managers provided him with a sense of purpose and motivation which was not impacted at

all by the meso level influences discussed by some participants within this study. Mike's transcript supports the importance and value of both previous developmental experiences and current relationships with colleagues on an individual's professionalism and ability to enact their own Ti (Day et al. 2006 and Day and Saunders 2006). His description of having more agency as a lecturer than as a Secondary Head is interesting and points to the importance of working relationships and the value of respect from colleagues.

4.4.5 In comparison to the previous accounts in this section Participant Charmaine had over twenty years' experience in different roles within the NHS when entering FE and this experience had influenced her idealised notion of the teaching role (James and Unwin 2016), which was very focused on producing nurses. Charmaine was an early career teacher working in Health Care at College A. Charmaine was appointed in 2009 the year of the final merger and interviewed in 2010. Charmaine discussed the importance of her vocational experience prior to joining the profession on her view of the teaching role. This included a mixture of social, cultural and political influences on her teaching journey, pointing to her mother and primary school teacher as two early formative influences. Charmaine's mother insisted that she had an education:

This was much against the Jamaican tradition, where the females stayed at home and had babies. My family believed strongly in education 'you have to be twice as good as the whites to get noticed' my mom said

When Charmaine expressed an interest in becoming a teacher, she was told it was better for her to become a nurse:

She didn't feel the local community was ready for a black teacher. Mom had visions about parents taking students out of the school because they were being taught by a black person

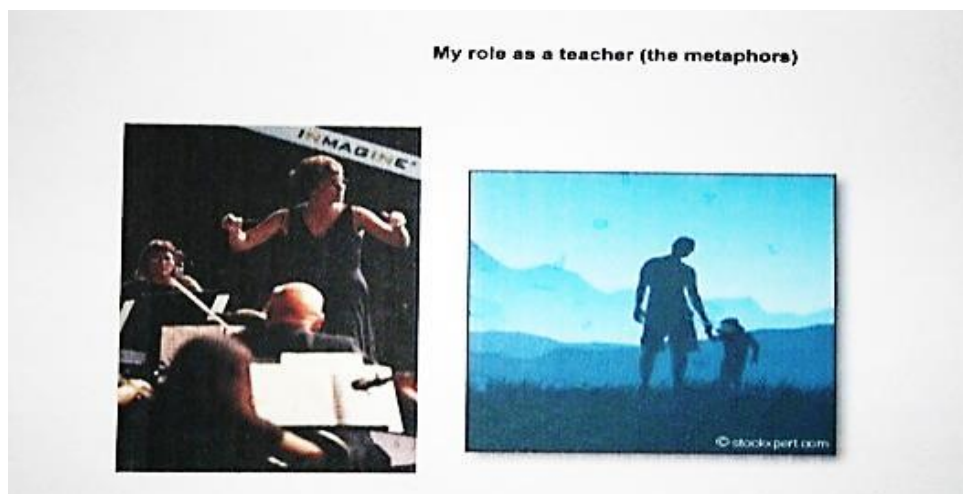
These excerpts give an insight into the positioning of different individuals within society by society (Foucault 1979) and they clearly influenced Charmaine in terms of career choice and what was deemed an acceptable career role, both in relation to her family and wider society. Restructuring of the National Health Service (NHS) led to Charmaine's role moving more into teaching, this started as a quality role, but then she got an opportunity to do some visiting teacher work in FE.

Charmaine's teaching image (**Figure Nineteen**) explores her transition into teaching and sees changes in the purpose of the role as a major developmental change. Initially, as outlined Charmaine had focused on the training of students to be the type of nurse she felt they should be:

Originally I definitely saw myself as a nurse who taught, but by the end of my teacher training programme I felt I had moved communities and I thought of myself as a teacher with nursing knowledge

This can be seen in the left hand image, which depicts an orchestra with a conductor at the front controlling all the members and their different contributions. This quite behaviourist approach resulted in high expectations of students within lessons, including time keeping, standards of dress, cleanliness and attitude towards authority figures.

Figure Nineteen

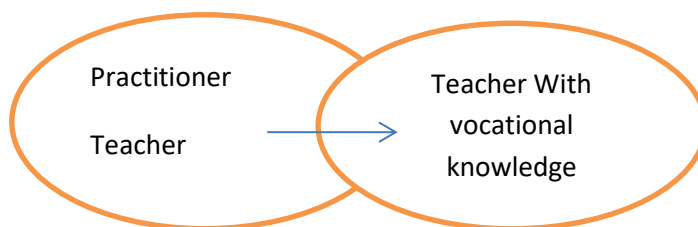


Wenger (1998) highlights the potential of communities of practice to affect an individual's identity and that the individual defines their membership of a community through their behaviour in relation to undertaking particular activities or roles. It is clear that Charmaine's positioning in relation to her identity as a teacher had a big influence on teaching style and the type of learning expected from the students. During the interview, Charmaine discussed how it had become clear that the approach she had initially adopted had not been as effective as expected in enabling learning to take place. She began to realise that her idealised notion of the teaching role focused purely on her own professional expectations of the behaviours of learners and did not take into account a student's personal circumstances which may impact on an individual's capacity to learn.

I now view things far more from the role of the learner as opposed to just considering my own expectations of them. I realised that prior to gaining experience and reflecting on my practice, that I had not been very student-centred, and I was very much training the students to be the type of nurse I felt they should be

The strong impact of vocational experience on perceptions of the teaching role is outlined by James and Unwin (2016) who point to the influence of dual professionalism on a teacher's values, beliefs and perceptions of the role. For Charmaine, the desire to reproduce the kind of nurses she wanted to see when she was a practitioner was important in explaining her behaviour as a teacher. It was only when she realised that this strategy was ineffective that she began to further develop her understanding of the needs of learners, as opposed to her expectations of them. This is reflected in the second aspect of the image, which sees Charmaine as a guide leading the students on a journey. Avis and Fisher (2006) discuss the influence of communities of practice on the development of teacher identities within the FE sector and the figure below outlines the change in communities that Charmaine described as part of her teaching journey.

Figure Twenty – Movement in communities of practice



This movement was an important aspect of Charmaine's development and as outlined by participant Ruth (Section 4.5.4) points to the influence of professional recognition and the experiences associated with teacher training on the development of an individual's perceptions of the teaching role. This change took place while Charmaine was completing her in-service teaching qualification (ITT) and Avalos (2011) discusses the value of ITT programmes on teacher development. Charmaine was clear that the programme had helped develop and enhance her view of the role of the teacher student relationship.

I feel I have become a better teacher, and I am more able to motivate students, while also understanding some students only attend to get their EMA and you are not reaching them

This final extract links back to the discussion in chapter two regarding the creation of markets within FE, one of the many initiatives put forward by government the education maintenance allowance rewarded learners on the basis of attendance for a recognised programme of study. Although this approach had success in ensuring higher attendance, as can be seen from Charmaine's comments it did not necessarily improve student learning.

4.4.6 Summary

The images used within this section provide four different interpretations and accounts of the professionalism debate within the FE sector. The accounts link to the ideological positioning and professional constructs highlighted within the literature (Clow 2001 & Clow 2005) they also add to the literature in distinct ways. The study has identified changes to an individual's professionalism as a teacher and a Manager, with several participants identifying aspects of de-professionalisation associated with the management role. For Participant Florence this was exemplified by the vulnerability displayed in her teaching journey of a naked figure with academic robes scattered beside it.

Other participants, were able to resist the meso level cultural forces outlined, with participant Mike discussing the changes having no impact on his motivation. Again the literature suggests there may be a period of disengagement toward the end of a teacher's career (Day et al 2006) but Mike was still very motivated and reinvigorated by entering FE after a long period in the schools sector. He felt his ability to resist the meso level changes outlined was at least in part due to his experience both within his career and as part of his professional development. The excerpts also suggest that it was in part down to the high regard in which he was held by both his team and managers.

In the previous section Stan was able to separate out the classroom and wider college environments and Sandra was able to prioritise activities based on her values and beliefs. In all the cases of agentic behaviour outlined in the study, professional values and beliefs were important in the individual's ability to enact their own view of the teaching role. Participant Dave's narrative points to the erosion of professional values in FE through the creation of a pseudo professionalism. This professionalism is more closely linked to the values of the market with individuals undertaking tasks linked to a managerial discourse. This is very different to the occupational professionalism outlined in chapter two where practitioners enact their professional judgement and values in relation to the teaching role. This was an important finding and will be further developed in chapter five.

The movement in communities of practice outlined by Charmaine reflected the individual's ability to distinguish between the expectations of learners linked to the values and beliefs

associated with a particular vocational specialism, and recognition of the needs of learners associated with the role of being a teacher. This also coincided with Charmaine undertaking a teacher training programme, where she would have been exposed to a variety of views and opinions regarding the role of teachers and the relationship between teachers and learners. The visual metaphor represented this development and transition, which identified the importance of the relationship between the teacher and learners in the learning process.

4.5 The impact of key events and people

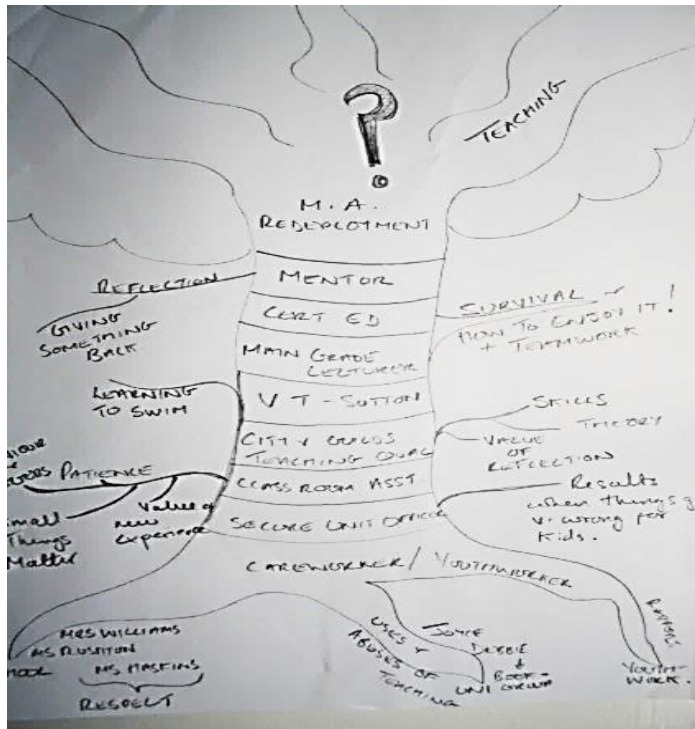
4.5.1 Introduction

This section will outline the influence of particular events or people as part of an individual's biography on their Ti. These elements are very broad and it could be argued are a normal part of any individuals' life story, what makes the instances outlined in this section important to the contribution of this study is the clarity with which the participants were able to identify their importance in developing their beliefs and attitudes and in shaping their professional values and agency towards teaching. This section will use the images and narrative of four participants to develop the importance of key events and people within the study sample.

4.5.2 Participant Sandra a mid-career teacher identified strong professional values and beliefs as central to Sandra's teaching metaphor (section 4.3.2) this section will explore their development as part of Sandra's biography. Sandra used the image of a tree (**Figure Twenty One**) to develop a range of metaphors outlining the significance of specific events and people in shaping her development as a teacher.

I thought about where does everything come from for me, there are things down here in the roots that give me things all the way up the tree and there are jobs I've done in the past and my journey into teaching right up to where I am now. It's a useful image because you might think you can take off the small little branches, but they are also important in helping to explain and shape the whole

Figure Twenty One



One of the early influences on Sandra's identity was the impact of three school teachers who imbued a respect for the teaching role and an understanding of the love of the subject. These are placed in the roots of the image. She discussed these influences opening up the possibility of becoming a teacher, even though it didn't become a driving ambition during these early years. Gibson (1995) found that Ti is strongly influenced by prior conceptions of teachers influencing their perception and understanding of the profession.

Sandra turned down an opportunity to stay on at university to complete a PhD in favour of something more practical to help people and this led her into youth work. This is placed as an important ring in the trunk of the tree and it was while undertaking this role that she developed a rapport and understanding of young people. This formed an important branch of the tree and aided Sandra in developing a 'skills set' which would later be applied to the teaching role

Kids in our society get a lot of blame, but not much credit for what they do

After six years in youth work, Sandra was re-deployed to a young offenders' institution with students with severe problems. She described the new environment as being effectively a prison and totally different to the role and skills she had developed in youth work

I had a complete nervous breakdown, I couldn't do anything. I look back on it now as a really positive experience, this is at the base of the tree and there is a split of the time before and the time after, it makes you re-evaluate everything, 'who' you are, what you're doing, why you're doing it

Within the visual image, this potentially very negative experience is seen as an important developmental moment and Sandra looks back on the experience as something which has helped with her current role as a teacher trainer.

It's meant I recognise stress in myself and I recognise stress in other people. I think it is one of the things in teaching that we are not good at in terms of recognising the effect of what we do on other people. In terms of working here, I think there are a lot of things that are imposed on people top-down and because pressure is put on line management their coping strategy is to pass things on, but it's not good management practice, and I don't think we have many managers who are prepared to pass things up and say that won't work, my staff can't do this and if you want to do this it will affect this and this

Sandra discussed the importance of the experiences she categorised as the roots within her image in grounding and providing a strong sense of purpose for teaching which had helped to prioritise activities within her current role. She outlined the importance of teachers having professional space within which to establish priorities, and these being an important aspect of enacting Ti. As a teacher trainer, she was regularly exposed to trainee teachers who were developing their own sense of identity, developing the key skills for survival. Barnes (2008) highlights the competing demands on trainee teachers and the various future wishes of potential students. Some of these include having more time to plan and wanting to become 'a real teacher' (p9). Sandra felt that given her teaching journey and the difficulties she had overcome that part of her role was developing the confidence and skills of trainees to become self-reliant:

I try and ensure that students understand that when your feet are on the bottom in the mud and your nostrils are just above the water that still counts as swimming, just getting to the end of the week is what counts. Some people panic and think they need to do everything that management from above tell them they've got to, but you have to be strong enough to say hang on a minute I can only do so much and I'm going to prioritise what I do

At the top of the tree teaching is clearly defined as an element that will continue to be part of Sandra's journey in the future, in one guise or another, for the rest of her career.

Some of the branches could be developing teaching and learning or mentoring, I have no idea what some of the related areas will be, but I know they will be linked to teaching

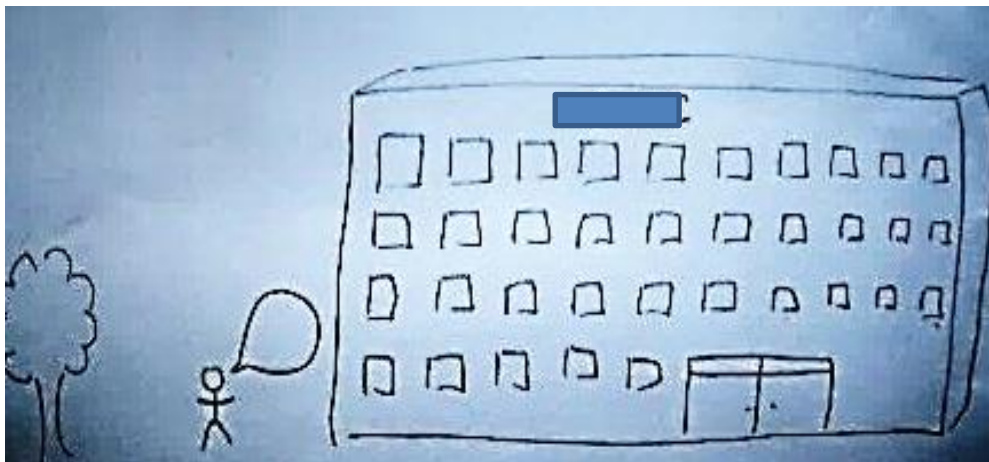
This very organic image provides a unique insight into the individualised nature of a teacher's journey and the variety of events that can help form and shape Ti. For Sandra it

was clear that the events that were part of her journey into teaching and her development as a teacher are inter-connected and part of a larger picture. The literature review discussed the importance of biography in developing a teacher's identity, Sammons et al. (2007) pointing to the influence of career stages and career trajectories, while Sachs (2005) identifies biographies helping to establish how to act and understand our place within society.

Sandra's image values the smallest of experiences, such as learning to swim, in terms of their role in helping shape her development. Many of these events occurred prior to becoming a teacher and importantly provided resources to be drawn on as a teacher. In particular, one potentially very negative event that not only influenced the shape of the tree and Sandra's journey into teaching, but also formed a basis of resistance against management actions being imposed on individual teachers. Just as the strength of a tree and its ability to resist the power of the elements comes from its roots, so Sandra's strength came from the beliefs and values that form the roots of the image. These then feed into the different experiences that formed the rings of the trunk and out to the individual branches and twigs, which helped provide structure and balance to the overall tree. For Cote and Levine (2002), this shows the ability of the individual to exercise agentic control over decisions regarding their role, and Gleeson et al. (2005) discuss it being an important element in maintaining self-motivation. Sandra's strength of purpose is influenced by both beliefs and values regarding education, and the personal experiences which have shaped and developed her as an individual.

4.5.3 In comparison to Sandra, participant Harjit identified the importance of specific experiences at the start of his teaching career that had influenced his development as a teacher. Harjit was a recently employed teacher in the merged college working as an hourly paid staff member in the business development directorate. The role involved working at a number of college campuses and satellite centres delivering to a range of entry level and level one programmes. He was also in the second year of his ITT programme. The first of the images represents his identity as a teacher during the first six months of employment at the college.

Figure Twenty Two



The image shows Harjit outside of the college with an empty voice bubble, the college building itself is stark and imposing almost prison like, with the doors closed and blank windows to the exterior. During the first interview he explained the meaning attached to different aspects of the picture:

Each of the elements within the image relates to a different aspect of my relationship with the institution as an employee. I placed myself outside the organisation to represent how I feel as an hourly

paid member of staff. I do not feel connected to the organisation or my work colleagues and I do not feel I have any status as a part-time member of staff

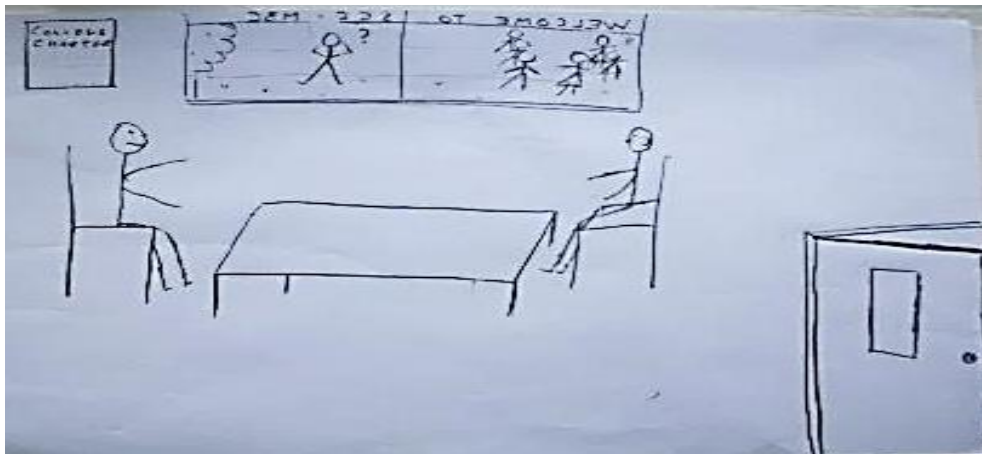
Harjit felt that this lack of status and recognition was not only down to his contract, but was also due to having no designated space in the staff room with his work colleagues as all the hourly paid staff were placed together in an 'AL' (additional lecturer) office. The lack of regular communication with other colleagues in Business Development meant he did not feel part of a team and he pointed to this as an important factor in his feelings of isolation in the workplace. The literature review referred to the importance of communities of practice in developing and maintaining an individual's beliefs and values through peripheral participation (Wenger 1998). As a trainee teacher, in the first few months of practice, Harjit was still very much forming and shaping his identity as a teacher (Sammons et al. 2007) and this lack of regular contact with colleagues appeared to be impacting both his identity and views of the college as reflected in the image.

Harjit's positioning reflects his lack of understanding of the functioning of the institution. As an hourly paid member of staff, he was not invited to directorate or course team meetings or involved in the development of the directorate's business plan. Therefore, there were no formal lines of communication regarding the functioning of the course team, directorate and wider organisation. This limited his reflexivity within the given context and suggests the adoption of a more prescribed sense of identity (Cooper and Olson 1996). Harjit discussed the image being very different from his idealised notion of teaching (Lasky 2005) prior to entering the profession.

During our final meeting to discuss my interpretation of his image, Harjit critically reflected on the implications of different aspects of the metaphors and assumptions associated with his narrative. We discussed his ability to be reflexive within his role (Garner and Harper 2003) and whether he felt able to challenge some of the perceptions outlined within his image. Following the meeting, Harjit decided to speak to his line manager and raise his concerns about communication and lack of status within the organisation. As a result the manager arranged for him to act as the directorate's representative on one of the college committees with the specific role of feeding back to the directorate issues and decisions made in the meetings. This allowed Harjit to meet a variety of teachers and managers from across the institution from different subject backgrounds. The agenda items provided Harjit with a deeper insight into the actual workings of the college and some of the reasoning and complexity behind particular decisions. He was then able to feedback this detail to full time staff within the directorate.

Three months later, we agreed to meet again to discuss a revised image of his identity as a teacher. He discussed getting more involved in the college and how it had helped develop his identity, particularly in relation to his esteem and feelings of value as a teacher. He also felt that things had changed because the manager had more experience of him as a person, and was prepared to listen to him.

Figure Twenty Three



The second image captures the detail of the changes to his identity following his meeting with the line manager and his experience as a cross-college representative:

This image shows me in the college as opposed to outside. I'm involved in dialogue, as opposed to having no voice. It shows me actually doing the speaking, and the manager doing some listening. There is now a voice and it is being listened to

Being involved in a two way communication process, being listened to and having a role in the process of change within the organisation was crucial to the development and change in Harjit's view of himself as a teacher. As Johnson (2007) suggests the discursive process is key to the development of Ti, in particular, feeling some sense of involvement in decisions which directly impact on an individual's role and the effect of this on a sense of well-being (Nias 1989).

Harjit had now moved to a more central position in the community, as opposed to his previous peripheral participation. This had involved changes in interactions within the

community, which had altered his perceptions of his role within it (Lave and Wenger 2001 & 2002) Despite these changes, Harjit still felt that there were clear differences between his role as a teacher and that of the manager:

There is still a table between the manager and me, and there is still a distance between us. The table has nothing on it, which I wanted to reflect that the manager doesn't have clear ideas about policy. I feel the door in the room is open which reflects an open door policy. The two small pictures on the wall at opposite sides of the table represent the different perceptions of me and the manager. For the manager the key focus is on student numbers and targets, while for me as a teacher the question mark relates to me focusing on knowledge acquisition. There is also a third blank image, which represents the college charter; I don't feel the college knows what its charter is

This transcription identifies that as an hourly paid member of staff with less than a year of teaching experience, Harjit was still able to clearly articulate the differences between the role of a teacher and a manager and how they might impinge on their conversation. The table was not only a tangible form of separation, it also implied a metaphoric sense of separation between teachers and managers, which was then further detailed and alluded to in other aspects of the image. The pictures on the wall further detail aspects of these differences and reflect the managers 'performativity' focus on student numbers and targets (Ball 2007) as opposed to the knowledge focus of the teacher (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). The blank image described the inability of the organisation to identify its own development needs and purpose, a theme echoed by several participants.

This second image not only gives a fascinating insight into an individual teacher's views about the college they work for, it also gives a real sense of how much Harjit's views as a

teacher had changed over a comparatively short period of time. The increased knowledge and understanding of the workings of the college and decision making process had not stopped him feeling there were distinct differences between the teaching and management roles within the institution, in fact it seems to have firmed up his thoughts about the differences between the roles. But, the second image is far more empowered and presents a view of the teacher with far more agency through an increased understanding of the culture and workings of the college. However, it reflects an agency gained through a deeper political understanding of the institution showing the potential importance of meso level organisational factors not directly related to the core teaching role (Priestly, Biesta and Robinson 2015).

The image shows the influence of key events and people, particularly at a meso organisational cultural level on a teacher's agency to enact their own identity (Gleeson and James 2007). The changes identify the value of the methodology in encouraging critical reflection to promote individual development, a valuable finding which will be discussed in the conclusions.

4.5.4 Ruth was a mid-career vocational teacher working in hairdressing, originally being employed by college B prior to the merger with college A. Ruth was interviewed in 2010 and discussed the importance of professional recognition as a key event in her development as a teacher. Ruth had recently gained the Certificate in Education (Cert Ed), and felt that this had elevated her status and confidence within the course team she worked. She commented,

'I feel it has legitimised my position in the team'. Ruth was the only member of the team not to have gained qualified teacher status, and felt undertaking the Cert Ed meant she had a better understanding of discussions within meetings and was more able to contribute as a team member. Rogers and Scott (2008), Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Sachs (2001) all discuss the importance of professional recognition to the development of an individual's Ti. For Ruth it was clear that this development meant moving beyond a quite instrumental view of the role of the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge, to viewing teaching as taking the student on an educational journey. Ruth's image shows the change she had gone through as she has developed as a teacher (**Figure Twenty Four**).

initially I thought teaching was all about $1+1=2$, now I realise that it is far more about a journey and taking the students with you on a journey

Figure Twenty Four



Ruth felt that since completing the Cert Ed, she was now looking for new development opportunities and was always prepared to think outside of the box. However, she commented that the nature of course team meetings restricted the ability of staff to contribute more fully:

The meetings are very management led often we are talked down to and not allowed to develop ideas. It is not why I'm here I'm here for the journey, for developing and moving outside the box, planting the seeds of knowledge

Ruth felt that this approach was affecting her professional development and ability to move towards the next stage of her journey. This is reflected in the literature, which discusses the effects of more autocratic leadership on teacher motivation and how they perceive their relationship with the institution (Bogler 2001).

Although I'm striving to move forward, I feel I'm being pulled backwards

Ruth discussed the effects of a recent lesson observation, which despite receiving a good grade had dented her confidence. She felt the observers had a very narrow set of parameters from which to judge her performance and were not concerned with looking holistically at all the work she undertook with the learners.

I feel that managers and observers need to come on the journey with staff to see what they do more holistically in their role with learners this would give a truer picture of what we do as teachers

The three separate events outlined by Ruth show both the positive and negative effects of experiences on an individual's Ti. For Ruth, professional recognition as a teacher was a defining moment, legitimising her role and status within the hairdressing team and

encouraging her to think of further development and a desire to make an impact as a teacher. However, the restrictive nature of the 'team meetings' outlined reflect the development of NPM within the FE sector (Smith and O'Leary 2013) and its impact on individual teachers. Ruth outlined the restrictive nature of lesson observations within FE (O'Leary 2013) and its effect on her motivation as a teacher. These different experiences reflect the susceptibility of some teachers to external influences (Gleeson and Knights 2006) and the potential of both negative and positive experiences on the development of an individual's Ti.

4.5.5 In comparison to Ruth, Melanie discussed the effect of student perceptions on her development as a teacher. Melanie was a relatively in-experienced teacher who had entered the profession as a second career following a long and successful role in imports and exports. Melanie was originally employed by college C, but was based between the two main campuses of the merged college (originally college A and college D). Melanie was interviewed in 2010 and discussed the sudden death of her father encouraging her to change career direction and enrolling on an Access to Higher education course, followed by a degree in science and a PGCE programme. During this period of study which extended to five years, Melanie held down a part-time job and paid a mortgage. At the end of Melanie's first year as a part-time teacher in Health, she was approached by a learner whom she had taught, and the conversation had a profound influence on Melanie's perception of the power of what teachers say and do.

I was thinking I could be saying anything here, Blah, blah, blah, the moon is blue the world is flat and Jesus was born in Glasgow, and I see all the ears are listening, well it must be true if Melanie says it.

I've realised they hang on everything I say, and I could be saying all those things, that brings a lot of responsibility with it

She continued:

When this student came to me and said you've changed the course of my life, I realised that I'd got to think carefully about what I said' I can't just go airing my views about things, I've got to be really careful

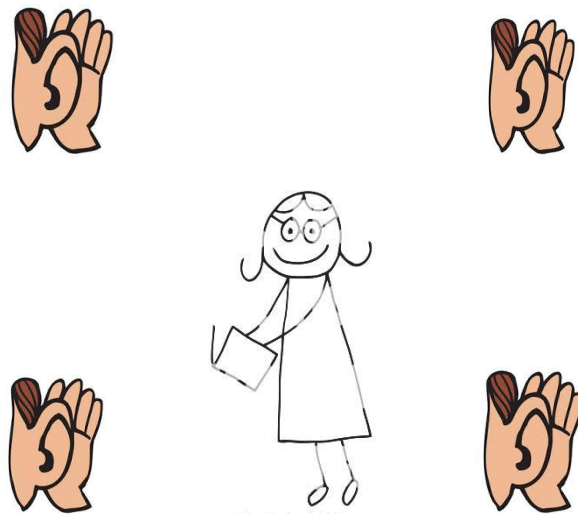
Interviewer - So would you say part of your role as a teacher is being a role model?

Yes definitely, the teacher could influence someone for all of their life

Melanie's image was of a teacher surrounded by ears, which reflected the importance of students listening to what is said and how they interpret it. She was very conscious of the power teachers have to develop learners both positively and negatively. She discussed how her perceptions of the role had changed since first entering the profession. Initially as with Charmaine and Ruth she thought of the role as focused on knowledge transfer, but over time she felt the ears were a metaphor for the process teachers needed to undertake in perceiving individual learner needs. During her first year she improved the outcomes on the course she was teaching and thought 'Job done', but following her perceptions about the wider role of the teacher she reflected:

Job done, not really, there is so much more to the role than I first imagined, you've got to be a bit of a counsellor, you need to take into account individual circumstances. Then suddenly I was thinking about all these things when I was teaching and that impacted my planning and my view about the holistic nature of the role

Figure Twenty Five



Melanie's image and metaphor depict both the value of teaching in terms of knowledge and skills development and the responsibility associated with the role. Melanie's awareness of the influence of individual circumstances on a student's ability to learn affected both her perception of the role and her actual practice in terms of planning and lesson development. Colley et al. (2007) and Mezirow (1997) both point to the importance of reflection on practice as an essential element in developing and transforming an individual's Ti, and the example provided by Melanie shows the development of a deeper understanding of the teaching role and the relationship between the teacher and learners.

4.5.6 Summary

There was evidence in the transcripts within this section as within the literature of the importance of both key events (Rogers and Scott 2008) and the influence of specific individuals on the development of a teacher's identity (Gee 2001). The narrative and

metaphors revealed the importance of a wide variety of social, cultural and biographical factors (MacLure 1983, Britzman 1991 and Cooper and Olsen 1996) on the development of the participants' Ti.

For participant Harjit the opportunity to challenge his perceptions of the college provided an opportunity for growth and development, not just for the individual, but also for the institution through heightened awareness of the isolation of part-time staff both from other colleagues and the functioning of the organisation, and reasoning behind different decisions. This revealed the dynamic of Ti and the ability of the individual to transform their identity in a relatively short period of time (Mezirow 1997). It also showed the value of the participatory approach of the study, which encouraged professional dialogue and the opportunity for change through the interaction between the researcher and the participant. Chapter two outlined the significance of distinct career stages on Ti and the influence of professional recognition was clearly demonstrated by participant Ruth. For Ruth achievement of her teacher training qualification gave her professional status with the team, which was an important developmental moment. However, during the same period evidence of the negative impact of the restrictive influences of NPM stifled her motivation and made the next stage of her journey unclear. Of particular concern to Ruth were the limitations of the observation process, which by reviewing a snapshot, or episodic measure of performance (O'Leary 2013) missed the wider and potentially more important contribution made towards the holistic development of students.

While for participant Melanie the importance of what teachers say was influential in her development following a meeting with a learner, the learner comments impacted Melanie's perception of the teaching role placing a real emphasis on the value of subject knowledge and skills of delivery.

Chapter Four Summary

This chapter has utilised a wide variety of participant images and metaphors from the twelve participants within the study to illustrate the key themes emerging from the data in relation to the main study question and areas of interest. The chapter has revealed the contested nature of Ti within FE and the wide variety of responses to marketization and NPM by different teachers in different situations. The findings were in many cases supported by the literature, but also identified new areas of interest. The notion of a pseudo professionalism within the sector being a particularly powerful example of not only the changes to what it means to be professional since incorporation, but also the way terms such as professionalism have been linked to desired areas of focus and used as a way of controlling behaviour.

The findings also call into question the importance of levels of experience as a teacher adding to teacher agency. In particular, participants with experience prior to incorporation potentially experiencing a greater deterioration in conditions of service and working practices to those employed post incorporation. This brought into focus the importance of an individual's biography, not just on their teaching journey, but as a basis from which to define themselves and their teaching practice.

The findings build further on the aspects of the conceptualisation discussed in chapter two in distinct ways, in particular the ability of participants to focus on teaching and learning, or to be pushed to take on a more prescribed identity. In addition to this, the findings contribute to identifying the wide range of different teacher views regarding their roles and the influence of organisational and wider political influences on their identities. Chapter five will develop these strands in more detail to consider what the findings have told us in relation to the main study question.

Chapter Five Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will draw together the main conclusions emerging from the findings in relation to the questions set for the study. In particular, what the study has told us about the nature and formation of FE Ti and the influence of marketization on individual teachers and their agency to enact their own professional values and beliefs in relation to the teaching role.

The chapter will be developed with reference to the contribution of the findings in combination with key literature from the study. The chapter will be split into nine sections, the first five of which will be framed by a summative conceptualisation discussed in section 5.2 linked to the main study question. The conceptualisation of FE Ti (**Figure Twenty Six**) is based on the research findings and concepts drawn from the literature. It will be mapped against participants within the study (5.2.2) to outline the different aspects of the conceptualisation and identify specific participant evaluative responses to marketization.

Sections 5.3/4/5 further develop specific conclusions in relation to the study. Section three and four will review what the findings have told us about the changes to individual teachers and their identities, while Section four and five will look at what the findings have told us about the effects of marketization on college cultures and professionalism; two of the wider debates within the FE sector. The final sections will review the contribution of the study and any recommendations emerging from the conclusions for further study. They will also

consider the value of the research methodology and the influence of the study on my personal development.

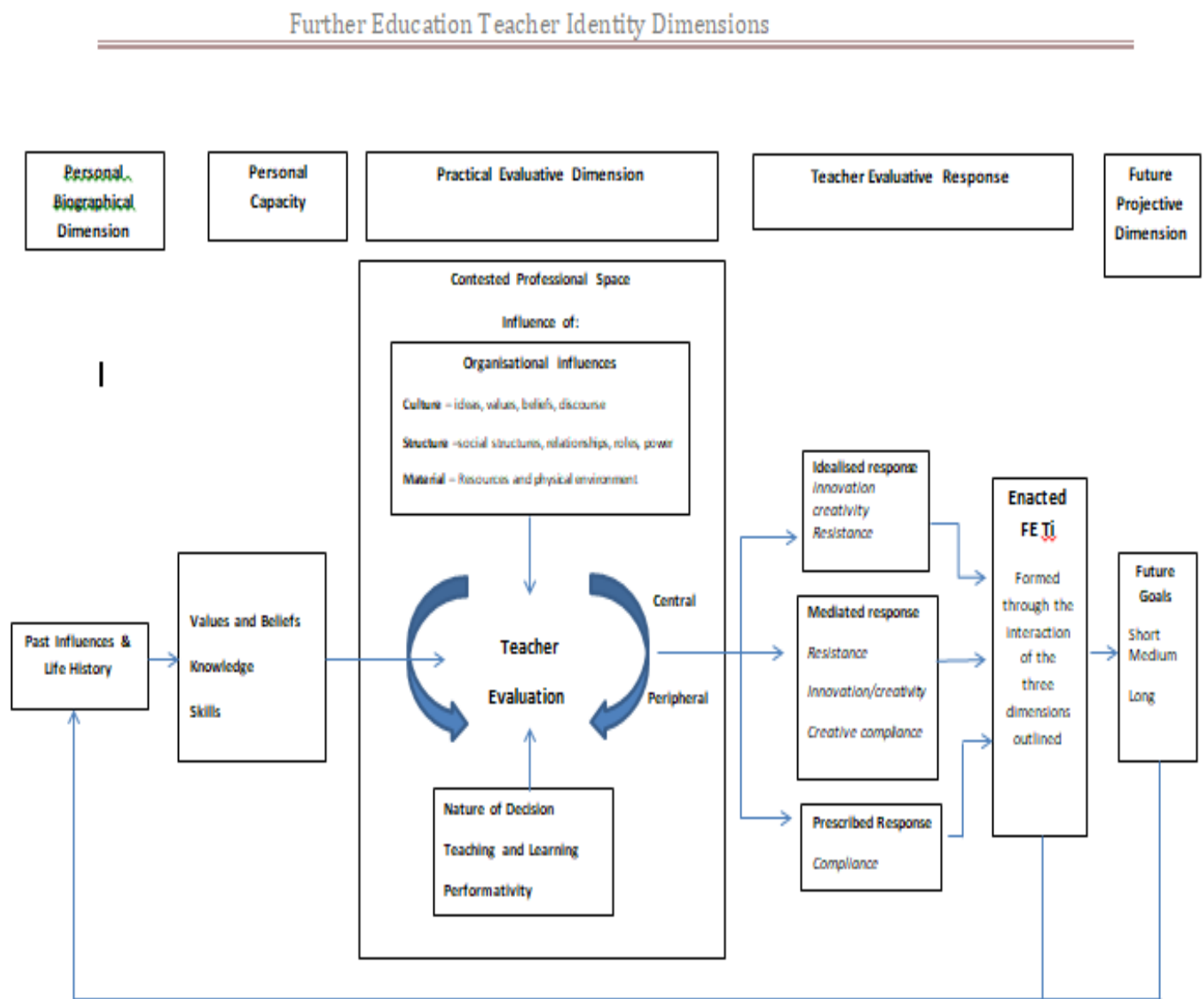
5.2 A conceptualisation of Teacher identity within a further education context.

This section will explore through a conceptualisation of Ti what the study revealed in relation to the main study question:

How do teachers in FE colleges, form, maintain and develop their professional identities, with particular reference to the interplay and tension between external government intervention and an individual's agency to act in ways which reflect their own sense of what being a teacher means?

The conceptualisation builds on the literature review undertaken in chapter two, which set the political context of FE, outlined the defining features of Ti and provided an insight into the relationship between the individual teacher and the organisation in terms of teacher agency and contested notions of professionalism. The conceptualisation outlines the central importance of teacher evaluations, biography and the development of personal capacity to both, the formation, development and maintenance of Ti. It also highlights the potential interactions and relationships between Ti, professionalism and teacher agency. A variety of participant responses (5.2.2) will be used to illustrate the effects of these different factors with the aim of providing working examples of FE Ti.

Figure Twenty Six



5.2.1 What is FE Ti? - An outline of the ideas and concepts linked to the conceptual representation

The conceptualisation presented draws on the work of Embrayer and Mische (1998) and Priestly, Biesta and Robinson (2015), and aims to provide a representation of my thinking regarding FE Ti. It acts as a visual metaphor of the inter-connected concepts I have found to be important during my research, capturing both the research themes emerging from the

data and the key concepts drawn from the literature review on Ti (and its associated concepts). The conceptualisation takes further the concepts and ideas outlined in chapter two adding further elements identified within the findings. In particular, the distinction between central and peripheral route evaluations which I identified in the narrative and metaphors of different participants, as outlined in the findings in relation to teaching and learning and performativity routines. For some participants the ability to enact their own sense of the teaching role meant they were less influenced by external organisational and governmental pressure to focus on performativity routines, enabling them to focus on teaching and learning as central to their evaluation of different decision making contexts. For other participants, the influence of organisational priorities, particularly linked to performativity routines, meant they focused less on teaching and learning, developing a more prescribed mode of identity.

The findings also revealed the importance of the cyclical nature of teacher evaluations linked to the outcome of different decision-making contexts. In particular, the de-professionalising effect on individual teachers of being unable to enact their identities was highlighted within their roles. In addition, the positive re-affirming effects of working towards individual future goals and targets on a teacher's sense of well-being and agency within new decision-making contexts.

FE Ti as presented in this study is a summation of the personal and interactional factors that make up an individual teacher's decision making context. It includes the development and changes to the individual over time, which make up their biography (MacLure 1993 and Day et al. 2006), linked to their personal capacity (Biesta and Tedder 2007) and the interaction

between the individual and the micro, meso and macro environmental context within a given set of circumstances (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009) and related to particular activities/decisions. The representation aims to capture the dynamic of teacher evaluations, which are reflected in the tension between the individual's personal capacity and future aspirations set against the influence of cultural, structural and material factors which make up the contested professional space in the representation presented.

The conceptualisation aims to capture the contested nature of the FE sector as outlined in the practical evaluative domain, which focuses on the interaction between the organisation and individual teacher as they evaluate and prioritise between competing demands. This sees the strategy adopted by the individual as a reflection of their evaluation within the contested professional space outlined directed towards a particular quality of outcome (Pantic 2015). The strategies adopted by the teacher (Gleeson and Knights 2006; Gleeson and James 2007; Trent 2014; Orr 2012) reflect the ability of the individual to prioritise within their role towards enacting their Ti, which the study found was influenced not only by the type of activity undertaken, but also by the individual's response to it. Two main types of activity are outlined in their broadest sense (teaching and learning and performativity) used by participants in the findings to distinguish between the competing role priorities.

The conceptual representation sees FE Ti as cyclical in nature, suggesting that for different interactions the variables associated within the practical evaluative domain may alter and so may the outcome (Priestly Biesta and Robinson 2015). This is reflected diagrammatically in the connection between an individual's enacted Ti and their biography, suggesting that

strategies adopted by an individual may strengthen or weaken their personal capacity in future decision making as they become aspects of their biography (Biesta and Tedder 2007).

5.2.2 Mapping individuals in the study to the conceptualisation of FE Ti

This section will use four participant examples to map the different concepts and strategies outlined in the conceptualisation of Ti.

For Participant Sandra, the influence of past life experiences, many prior to entering teaching shaped her beliefs and values and in combination with the development of skills and knowledge as a teacher formed the basis of resistance against the effects of marketization. Sandra evaluated each situation in the practical evaluative domain based on the centrality of teaching and learning and the student teacher relationship. This was seen in both visual metaphors (Figure Nine & Twenty One) and enabled Sandra to use a (central route evaluation) as outlined in the conceptualisation prioritising teaching and learning above performativity activities. This in turn led to the adoption of a more idealised strategy by the participant working effectively towards future professional goals.

This behaviour fed into Sandra's experience and biography and served to re-enforce and develop personal capacity, which strengthened her ability to further resist and innovate against NPM in new decision environments. That is to say part of Sandra's agency was built on the positive impact of enacting her identity as a teacher and this further enhanced her evaluative focus in new decision making contexts.

Participant Stan also used previous experience, particularly prior to his teaching career, as a basis for developing values and beliefs in relation to teaching. For Stan maintaining the teacher student relationship was an essential element of his identity and influenced his evaluation of different decisions within the practical evaluative domain. Stan's teaching image (Figure Ten) clearly recognises the tension and pressure to focus on performativity routines, but Stan was able to maintain a focus on teaching and learning by assigning these activities a peripheral route (as evidenced by his response to the class in progress signs). Stan saw maintaining this focus as essential to his success and the success of the college, and this clearly formed an important aspect of the way he evaluated teaching and learning and performativity activities. Stan's narrative also suggested a clear view of the wider political debate regarding the college and the effects of governmental influence and this was an important further element in Stan's evaluation of different decision making contexts as a teacher, enabling him to use a (central route evaluation) prioritising teaching and learning as the main focus of his teaching role.

In comparison to the two previous participants Dave's narrative and metaphors revealed a more prescribed identity, which reflected de-professionalisation and loss of agency as a consequence of the effects of marketization. This example further outlines the importance of biography, Dave's experience prior to incorporation magnifying the loss of professionalism and agency through the changes to the sector. His teaching metaphor (Figure Eleven) reflected reduced skills and control, which can be seen as his evaluation of the focus of the teaching role within the practical evaluative domain. His response to marketization was to re-focus his time on developing new skills and knowledge associated with managerialist

requirements. This altered his personal capacity associated with teaching and learning seen in the whittling down of the spokes in his teaching metaphor. The increased time spent undertaking activities outside of his control also affected his ability to work towards personal future goals further eroding his professionalism. Given the cyclical nature of the conceptualisation, Dave's evaluation of new decision making environments served to re-enforce this sense of loss and powerlessness.

Further to this, participant Florence outlined similar feelings of loss and powerlessness regarding control over the order and priority of activities within the practical evaluative domain. Florence felt she had no control over the number and variety of activities, which she discussed being *ad hoc* and a process of firefighting. As with participant Liz, Florence was subject to trialectic pressures within the practical evaluative domain which added an additional pressure in the evaluation of different decision making contexts. For Florence the changes in her teaching journey were represented in the metaphor of the robes scattered beside her naked figure. This powerful metaphor showing a physical manifestation of the process of de-professionalisation, which was added to in each decision making context through the inability to make decisions which reflected her own values and beliefs. Again the cyclical nature of this process of change meant that these negative responses were likely to become habitual as the individual gives up their own ideals and goals to satisfy the competing demands of others in the practical evaluative domain.

The literature discusses these responses leading to more habitual behaviour where the individual is less aware of potential alternatives within any given situation and may adopt a 'conditioned' response in a particular context. (Conner and Armitage 1998; Eagly and Chaiken 2007; Priestly Biesta and Robinson 2015).

5.2.3 Summary

The different abilities of individuals to utilise their experience, personal capacity and future goals to enable them to enact their identity as teachers, from the evidence presented is central to the development and maintenance of an individual's Ti in the FE sector. For some participants in the study this gave them considerable agency, particularly within the classroom setting and these positive experiences served to further develop personal capacity allowing them to distinguish priorities, re-enforcing their beliefs and values. For other participants their evaluative responses, over time, in each new situation, served to erode personal capacity leading to the adoption of a more prescribed sense of identity (Vähäsantanen et al. 2008; Orr 2012).

The different elements of FE Ti presented in the conceptualisation are further discussed in the contributions of the study (section 5.6). The next three sections will focus on some of the wider educational debates emerging from the findings and their effects on teachers and the FE sector.

5.3 Agency inside and outside the classroom

The teachers and managers within the study demonstrated a variety of different attitudes and responses to the marketised FE sector. The study evidenced a lack of consistency with the literature in supporting the notion of increasing experience leading to greater agency as a teacher. In fact, some teachers described experience of pre-incorporation FE with its greater freedoms and flexibilities adding to the feeling of loss caused by the adoption of NPM. In effect the difference in these experiences was described by participants as a 'stripping away' of professionalism and autonomy and as a 'whittling away' of teaching skills and knowledge.

In the cases outlined it was the actual changes to roles that had the greatest impact, the speed, variety and number of tasks focused on measures of performance and general administrative duties as opposed to teaching and learning that caused feelings of de-professionalisation and reduced agency. The tangible re shaping of teacher and manager duties was seen as central to post incorporation changes on participants with reduced teacher agency in this study. The trialectic pressures outlined by both FTMs significantly impacted their agency to act in ways which reflected their own values and beliefs. From the evidence of this study pressures associated with this role provide the greatest challenge for the individual in acting in an agentive manner to develop and maintain their Ti.

The ability of participants to resist, mediate/moderate and innovate to enact their own sense of Ti against the changes outlined was an important aspect of the main question and the

findings identified some important examples of this capacity. A number of participants showed evidence of agency linked to their specific roles, but the source of agency was very different between the teaching participants and the middle and senior manager in the study.

For the teachers in the study the ability to utilise personal capacity (Biesta and Tedder 2007) within a given situation provided the mechanism for them to develop effective strategies to either counter managerialism, or to re-claim their identities as teachers. The study revealed limited evidence of any specific meso cultural aspects which fostered personal capacity (as suggested is needed by Giddens 1984), instead in all but one case, individuals drew upon internal resources and were able to resist, innovate or mediate almost despite the external environment. In the cases of agentic behaviour, participants were able to focus on teaching and learning with performativity routines having less impact. This enabled the individuals to evaluate each new experience in a way which allowed them to maintain and develop their personal capacity in each new situation, rather than each situation serving to reduce personal capacity leading to less agentic behaviour. For several participants the separation of the classroom and wider college environment reflected the different values ascribed to both spaces and an ability to reclaim the classroom as the place to enact their identities (Fligstein and McAdam 2012).

The middle manager in the study showed the ability to 'work within the system' towards changing it to more reflect his own values. This strategy did not involve direct resistance and in so doing did not involve Brian drawing attention to his actions as opposing organisational values. However, he referred to its effectiveness in engendering change at a

national level, particularly around the content and design of Art qualifications. This almost subversive strategy appeared to be very effective and Brian's teaching image showed it was grounded by strong professional values and beliefs focused on teaching and learning. The support of his team also aided his agency and this was developed by being seen as a teacher, sharing the same professional (as opposed to managerial) values. This behaviour was clearly 'goal focused' and aligned to the notion of strategic compliance outlined in chapter two (Gleeson and Shain 1999). However, for other participants the lack of any long term goal linked to their behaviour suggested a more tactical compliance as outlined by Orr (2012). This type of behaviour reflected the greatest level of de-professionalisation, where individuals were unable to enact their identity as teachers within given decision making contexts.

In comparison, the senior manager within the study felt that his agency was directly related to his role, his knowledge of the reasoning behind different decisions enabling him to act as a corporate agent. This was reflected in his willingness to subjugate his views as a teacher focused on the best learning environment in favour of his managerialist focus, which put college self-interest above those of students.

The dynamic seen within the study goes beyond the agency/social suggestion debate, suggesting a more complex set of variables involved in the development of agency as outlined in chapter two. The wide variety of strategies adopted by participants' points to the colleges operating as contested professional spaces. This is an important conclusion and of particular note is the role of biography in the development of professional values and

beliefs, which was seen as a key aspect in providing participants with a base from which to resist negative cultural influences.

5.4 Changes to college culture and purpose

The findings suggest that the changes to FE have had a fundamentally deleterious effect on the colleges in this study. Participants referred to the institutions lacking purpose and a sense of future direction, evidenced by one participant's account of trying to find an answer on 'sharepoint', and the lack of managerial understanding regarding the mission and vision of the institution. The vacuous nature of the institutions points to them becoming driven and controlled by central government policy leading to the inability of senior staff to develop clear organisational goals as the only direction that mattered was that developed by the government. This was also evidenced in the *ad hoc* nature of managerial activity over which participants had limited control and a college charter which sought to re-brand the institution, with no clear purpose behind the changes other than centralised control.

Participants referred to a lack of longer term staff development reflecting the inability of the colleges to identify the importance of developing professional capital an essential element in developing the quality of teaching and learning (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012). The findings also pointed to a loss of shared connections between practitioners across institutions and within the organisation with limited opportunities to meet informally due to the nature of timetabling and multi-site delivery. In combination with the changes outlined this lack of

connectedness further added to the feelings of insecurity and instability referred to by several participants.

The separation by some teachers of the wider college environment and the classroom provided a powerful distinction for staff in defining their roles. This can be seen as an intentional act by teachers who have physically separated out teaching and learning from other college activities. This is not only an agentic act of control it also seen to represent the value teachers ascribe to different 'spaces' of the institution, which allow them to reclaim their roles and enact their agency and professionalism.

The findings suggest that the lack of a unified purpose for FE as outlined by Wolf (2015), with colleges driven by the need to maximise income and constantly improve efficiency in combination with an ever changing policy and funding methodology (Keep 2014) has never allowed institutions to focus on longer term planning and development. This has become so engrained that the findings of this study suggest colleges have become incapable of developing a clear sense of direction to galvanise staff, based on a shared sense of the importance of teaching and learning as the central purpose of the institution.

5.5 FE professionalism post-incorporation a 'new professionalism' or just unprofessional?

Participants discussed the negative impact of post incorporation changes within FE on teacher professionalism with one teacher describing the notion of a 'pseudo

professionalism', which was highlighted as being fake, as it lacked a common set of theories linked to beliefs about teaching and learning (James and Dufour 2000). This inability to unify the goals of the college and teachers was seen as both a point of resistance for some teachers in enacting their identities, and also as the focus of the de-professionalisation. It could be argued that the changes outlined represent a Reconstruction of Professionalism within the sector, (Bathmaker and Avis 2005; Edward et al. 2007), but the evidence from this study suggests that in many aspects of college life, we are seeing the end of organisational professionalism with several participants demonstrating dramatically altered or non-existent professional status, which has been imposed by new types of control and limitations on professional autonomy and judgement. This study has shown that in FE the term professionalism is used largely as a means to control behaviour and to justify an ideological positioning that is so far removed from an occupational notion of the term professional that many of the aspects of this 'new professionalism' are in fact un-professional, because they lack any consistent core values and beliefs with which to motivate individual teachers.

This re-focusing of particular activities associated with the teacher's role is an essential component in the re-engineering of what it means to be a teacher (Smith 2015). This draws into focus the impact of macro environmental government changes at a micro level on the focus of individuals within job roles (Beck & Young 2010). This leads us to conclude that from the evidence of this study the marketization of FE is fundamentally un-professional and as such is likely in many cases to lead to teacher dis-satisfaction and de-professionalisation.

5.6 Contribution of the study

The central question aimed to review how FE teachers form, maintain and develop their identities to enact their sense of what it means to be a teacher against the backdrop of marketization. The areas of interest focused on the agency of teachers and the nature of professionalism within FE and what strategies individual teachers employed in response to the changes outlined. I have identified what I consider to be the main contributions of the study under five headings, each of which will be outlined below.

5.6.1 Conceptualising the variations in participant response to marketisation

The participant accounts point to the individualised nature of identity formation, development and re-formation in the FE sector. The varying abilities of teachers to negotiate their identities in the political context outlined provided a real insight into the nature of identity construction. The different strategies adopted by participants reflected these variations, from those able to fully enact their identities based on their own values and beliefs to those undertaking a more prescribed identity, where the individual demonstrated very limited control over decision making and task priority. The agency identified by some participants evidenced their ability to effectively contest decision making environments by focusing on teaching and learning enacting their own beliefs and professional values as teachers in the practical evaluative domain outlined. In comparison, the examples of de-professionalisation represented the negative impacts of marketization, subjugating the identities of several participants leading to conditioned behaviours based on organisational compliance. The first tier managers within the study demonstrated significant de-professionalisation due in large part to the trialectic pressures outlined. The findings suggest

that the competing demands associated with this role presents perhaps the greatest challenge for individuals in enacting their identities as teachers.

The conceptualisation of Ti along with participant examples mapped against different concepts within the representation provided a view of the formation and development of FE Ti. In particular, the varied pressures on individual teachers and the strategies and behaviours they may adopt in response to the external factors outlined. The two evaluative routes presented which I identified in the findings, highlighted the ability of individuals to focus on teaching and learning, assigning performativity tasks a peripheral route as I have termed it, or to experience reduced agency through an increased focus on performativity tasks within the practical evaluative domain. This is seen as providing an insight into the central research question, and as such represents an important contribution of the study.

5.6.2 Biography and personal capacity

There was evidence of the importance of individual biographies on the development of personal capacity (skills, knowledge and values), which influenced the ability of individuals to act in an agentic manner in different decision making environments. The examples outlined within the findings, point to biography being an important point of both resistance to marketization through established beliefs and values, and as an important element of the de-professionalisation of teachers through the importance and impact of experience on perception and judgements. The dynamic and cyclical nature of Ti outlined in the conceptualisation, constantly re-fashioning identities within each decision making context

was seen to re enforce both agentive and prescribed behaviours, reclaiming a focus on teaching and learning for some participants and serving a to reduce agency for others. As part of this dynamic environment, the development of skills, knowledge and values were also affected by the focus of the teacher. For teachers who were able to focus on teaching and learning, each new situation served to further develop skills and knowledge associated with their own values and beliefs. While examples outlined within the study demonstrated potentially reduced skills and knowledge by focusing on activities less associated with the core teaching role.

5.6.3 Changes to college culture and focus

The participant accounts not only informed us of the wide variety of responses to marketization, they also gave us an insight into the impact of the changes for the colleges within the study. The accounts pointed to the institutions lacking direction and having no clear sense of purpose. Further to this, the low value given to teaching and learning and the importance given to performativity routines appeared to be central to the tension and dynamic outlined within the main question.

The lack of connectedness both within and outside the colleges within the study was highlighted by some participants to further distinguish between the college culture pre and post-incorporation, which in combination with an emphasis on short term staff development provided an insight into the cultural change within FE.

Several management participants pointed to the importance of acting as *corporate agents* with one narrative revealing the un-willingness of some senior managers to challenge corporate decisions, which served to re-enforce existing cultures. The *ad hoc* nature of management tasks revealed by all management participants within the study reflected a lack of organisational direction and consistency. The participant narratives outlined the impact of changed college culture for the teachers and managers within their different hierarchical positions.

5.6.4 Changes to professionalism within FE

The evidence from this study suggests that there has been a significant re-shaping of what it means to be professional within the FE sector. As outlined earlier in this chapter and within the findings, this is closely aligned to focusing on educational outcomes at the expense of teaching and learning as the central priority for the institution. The findings point to this being a government driven agenda, which is enacted by colleges and this was seen in a number of the narratives with several participants outlining changes to teaching roles.

The lack of professional values and focus outlined in the findings was seen as a reflection of the institutions within the study, suggesting that the real battle in FE is between the government and individual teachers with colleges merely acting as conduits through which government policy is enacted. The hollow nature of the institutions as outlined points to their inability to act as a filter through which policy is reconstituted in relation to

institutional purpose and mission meaning they do not act in any way to support the development of teacher identity and professionalism.

5.6.5 The participatory focus of the study

The interpretive stance and participatory approach adopted within the study in combination with the methodology developed, using visual metaphors and narrative to analyse participant responses, framed the nature of knowledge production, which became a distinguishing feature of the analysis in relation to the questions set. The responses encompassed the effects of the changes on teachers and teacher managers and revealed the inter-connected nature of Ti and the other key concepts within the study.

The visual metaphors proved useful vehicles to explore individual participant journeys into teaching and perceptions of the teaching role. The narratives revealed the complexity of different influences on individual participants in developing, negotiating and re-negotiating their identities. The ability to review the influences of biographical events on the values and beliefs of teachers provided insights into both points of resistance and sources of de-professionalisation in relation to marketization.

The ability of the methodology to encourage teacher transformation for one participant as a consequence of involvement in the study was of particular value in revealing the usefulness

of the approach in encouraging critical reflection as a mechanism for individual change and development.

5.7 Reflections on my personal development

From a personal perspective completing the thesis having retired from the sector has been a somewhat cathartic experience. It has allowed me to reflect on my own career and provided the opportunity of personal development and growth, something which the study discussed being largely missing from the sector.

I feel having undertaken the work that the sector will change as marketization has quite clearly failed. It has failed the students it was meant to serve, who have been seen as income and costs, by colleges who have lost the ability to understand their wider purpose.

Importantly, in relation to the findings, it has failed the teachers who work in colleges, by marginalising them, starving them of the developmental opportunities to grow professionally to enhance their skills and knowledge and to become the best teachers they can for the benefit of students and wider society.

5.8 Concluding comments – what might the future FE look like?

This brings us to the question of what next? What might FE look like as a post marketised sector? It is clear from the work of writers such as Hargreaves and Fullan, writing about the impact of neoliberalism within the schools' that the U.K. is missing out considerably compared to countries such as Finland, Singapore and Canada in terms of harnessing the potential of its teachers and the benefit of improved opportunities for individuals through education. By marginalising teachers and the important role of teaching in society

Hargreaves and Fullan argue we are missing the chance of harnessing our professional capital.

Hodgson and Spours (2017) refer to austerity forcing the government to implement the post sixteen area based reviews due to the current state within the sector, pointing to market led competition fuelling 'inefficiency and ineffectiveness' (2017, p.6). They suggest that the government assumes a smaller number of more economically viable colleges, with the addition of a few institutes of technology represents the future for FE. However, they point to this potentially leading to limited change and further decline in the sector. They go on to discuss the idea of FE operating as a 'connective hub' in local collaborative learning systems. This would involve colleges sharing expertise and resources, recognising individual strengths and weaknesses and focusing on collaboration rather than competition.

At the time of writing, the lack of change as an outcome of the area review process suggests that colleges are not ready for further unrest. Having been driven by the imperative for growth and efficiency for over quarter of a century many colleges are unrecognisable from their original form. Although it could be argued changes would almost certainly have occurred, whatever the culture, it is difficult to say whether the institutions as they are currently configured are ready for re-developing a sense of purpose focused on teaching and learning and operating in a more connected way to support teacher development. However, the example of participant transformation as a consequence of involvement in the study along with the strong agency outlined by several participants provide a sense of hope for the future development of the sector, which needs to be fostered and encouraged. The powerful metaphors of teachers enacting their identities focusing on the importance of improving

teaching and learning needs to be seen as central not only to the empowerment and success of teachers and teacher managers, it is also central to the success of FE.

5.9 Potential further studies

Given the insights provided, it may prove valuable over a longer period of analysis to evaluate the effects of teacher focus on career trajectory to see what impact the negative effects of marketization have on teachers and whether they remain in FE. Equally, linked to this, if the agentic behaviour of teachers continues over a longer period of time and what are the effects of these behaviours and focus on teacher careers.

The FE Ti conceptualisation developed contains a variety of concepts and inter-connected relationships each of which is worthy of further study; In particular, further development of our understanding of the individual elements of the proposed conceptualisation and the evaluative process teachers go through when making individual decisions. This could further enhance our knowledge of Ti in an FE context.

The research methodology is also worthy of consideration for adoption and adaption. The value of visual images and the metaphors linked to them provided some unique insights within a particular context. The richness of the detail within this study would perhaps have been difficult to replicate using other research designs.

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Appendix One

Variations in Teachers' Work, Lives and Effectiveness (2006)

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0-3 years – Commitment: Support and challenge.

The focus here was a developing sense of efficacy in the classroom. This was a phase of high commitment. A crucial factor in a successful negotiation of this period was the support of school/department leaders. Poor pupil behaviour was seen as having a negative impact. Teachers in this professional life phase had either a developing sense of efficacy (60%) or a reduced sense of efficacy (40%).

4-7 years – Identity and efficacy in the classroom.

The key characteristic was the increased confidence about being effective teachers. Seventy eight per cent of teachers in this phase had taken on additional responsibilities, which further strengthened their emerging identities. The management of heavy workloads had a negative impact on some teachers. Teachers in this professional life phase were grouped as a) sustaining a strong sense of identity, self-efficacy and effectiveness (49%); b) sustaining identity, efficacy and effectiveness (31%); or c) identity, efficacy and effectiveness at risk (20%).

8-15 years – Managing changes in role and identity: Growing tensions and transitions.

This phase was seen as a watershed in teachers' professional development. Eighty per cent had posts of responsibility and for many there were decisions to make about progression in their career. Of the teachers in this professional life phase, 76 per cent were judged to have sustained engagement, with 24 per cent showing detachment/ loss of motivation.

16-23 years – Work-life tensions: Challenges to motivation and commitment.

As well as managing heavy workloads, many were facing additional demands outside school (health issues or from partners, children or as carers) as well as additional responsibilities in school, making work-life balance a key concern. The struggle for balance was often reported as a negative impact. The risk at this stage was a feeling of career stagnation linked to a lack of support in school and negative perceptions of pupil behaviour. The three sub-groups in this phase were: a) further career advancement and good results leading to increased motivation/commitment (52%); b) sustained motivation, commitment and effectiveness (34%); or c) workload/managing competing tensions/career stagnation leading to decreased motivation, commitment and effectiveness (14%).

24-30 years – Challenges to sustaining motivation.

Maintaining motivation in the face of external policies and initiatives, which were viewed negatively, and declining pupil behaviour was the core struggle for teachers in this phase. While 60 per cent of primary teachers in this phase were judged to have retained a strong sense of motivation, over half the secondary teachers were rated as losing motivation. Teachers in this phase were categorised as either sustaining a strong sense of motivation and commitment (54%); or holding on but losing motivation (46%).

31+ years – Sustaining/declining motivation, coping with change, looking to retire.

For the majority of teachers this was a phase of high commitment. Of the small group of teachers in this phase (22), almost two thirds were judged to have high motivation and commitment. Positive teacher-pupil relationships and pupil progress were the basis of this. Government policy, health issues and pupil behaviour were often perceived as the most negative factors for this group. Teachers in this phase were seen as either maintaining commitment (64%); or 'tired and trapped' (36%).

Appendix Two

<p style="text-align: center;">Key Questions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Questions related to the individuals image of being a teacher</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Areas for consideration</p>
<p>1) How would you say your image describes your role as a teacher</p> <p>2) What are the important relationships and metaphors within your image</p> <p>3) In what way would you say your image of being a teacher differs from your idealised view of the role</p> <p>4) What factors do you think account for the differences between your actual image of being a teacher and your idealised view of being a teacher</p>	<p>1) Look at discourses and metaphors – what are the key aspects of the picture - discuss these</p> <p>2) What discourses do the metaphors and relationships link to – Power – issues of agency – culture – relationships between the individual and the organisation/students</p> <p>3) Consider aspects of the participant’s idealised view of being a teacher – role model – giving/ receiving knowledge nature of the student – teacher relationship</p> <p>4) Is it down to external factors – has it changed with experience, the reality of the teaching role. Is it changes in students – organisational culture- expectations</p>

<p>5) Is there a relationship between your view of the role of teaching and your motivation towards teaching</p> <p>6) Has your view of the role of teaching affected your attitude and behaviour towards teaching</p>	<p>5) How has this impacted on motivational strength - highly motivated – less motivated - Hygiene factors – Equity input/output – social factors</p> <p>6) How has it affected their attitude - positively or negatively, what impact has this had on their actual behaviour – teaching style results?</p>
<p>Questions related to the individuals journey to becoming a teacher</p> <p>7) How do your images describe your teaching journey</p> <p>8) What do you consider have been the key events and influences on your teaching journey</p> <p>9) How do you think the factors and influences that have shaped your development have changed over time</p> <p>10) Why do you think this has occurred</p> <p>11) What did the change feel like</p>	<p>Areas for consideration</p> <p>7) Look at discourses and metaphors – what are the key aspects of the picture, discuss these</p> <p>8) Consider External - organisational – people</p> <p>9) Consider personal – professional – examples</p> <p>10) Consider External – Personal</p> <p>11) Empowering – dis-empowering – isolating – de-professionalising</p>

<p>12) Have these changes affected your motivation towards teaching – if yes in what way</p> <p>13) Has your attitude and behaviour towards teaching changed over time – If yes – in what way</p>	
<p>Questions related to exploring the relationship and influence of the organisation on the role of being a teacher (Manager) and the teaching journey</p> <p>12) How would you say your images describe the relationship between the organisation and you as a teacher</p> <p>13) What influence do you feel the organisation has had on shaping your role as a teacher</p> <p>14) Has this influence changed over time – if yes how</p> <p>15) Do you feel the organisation imposes any boundaries or controls on your role as a teacher</p> <p>16) <i>Do you feel your role as a manager has</i></p>	<p>Areas for consideration</p> <p>12/13/14 – All these are looking at issues of power – organisational culture and how the individual fits in</p> <p>13) What types of control – specify – time –rules – threats – fear –procedures – policies</p> <p>14) Explore how this has happened – changes in motivation and attitudes</p> <p>16/17/18 - <i>explore the role of managers as mediators of change – ideological buffers between senior managers and teachers. How</i></p>

<p><i>impacted on your role as a teacher</i></p> <p>17) <i>How have you dealt with/resolved conflicts/differences between your role/priorities as a teacher and your role/priorities as a manager</i></p> <p>18) <i>Do you feel your staff are more likely to implement changes you put forward because they see you as a colleague (teacher) who has a management role, as opposed to a manager who is not a teacher</i></p> <p>19) <i>Do you think the organisation has influenced your journey in becoming the teacher you are today</i></p>	<p><i>do managers resolve the competing demands/values of their different roles. How does this play out with their staff who see them as colleagues</i></p>
<p>Questions related to the influence of external factors and the role of the teacher</p> <p>20) <i>Do you feel the new government standards for teachers have had any impact on how you view your role as a teacher.</i></p>	<p>Areas for consideration</p> <p>20) <i>Are these individual perceptions, or are there any concrete examples of how it has affected actual practice</i></p>